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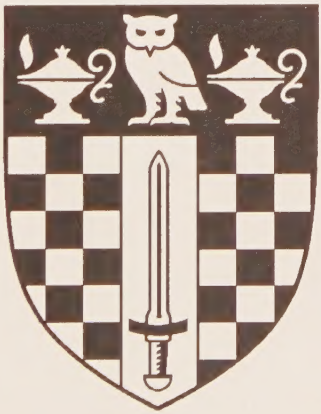

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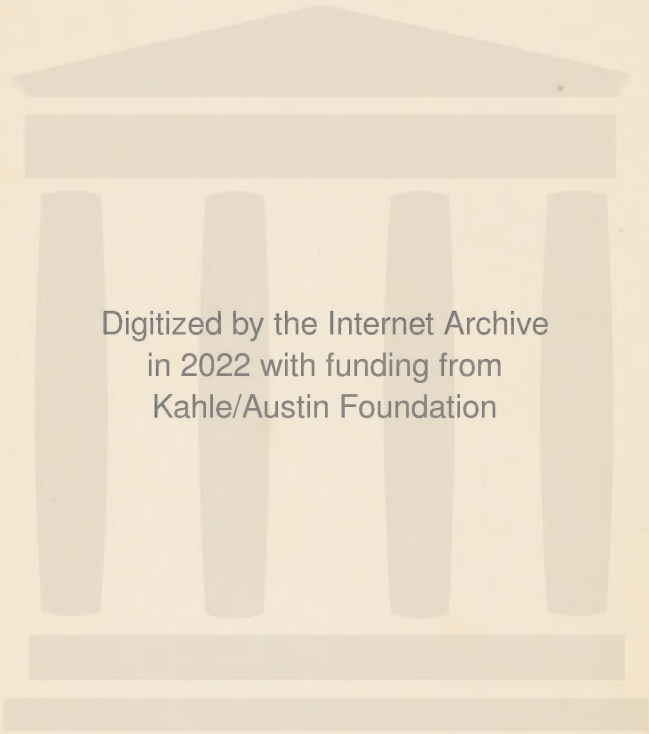
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MEDIAEVAL LONDON

BY THE SAME WRITER

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MEDIAEVAL LONDON

BY GORDON HOME

Author of 'Roman York,' 'Roman London,' etc.

IN COLLABORATION WITH

EDWARD FOORD

LONDON: 1927
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TO THE MEMORY OF

C. L. KINGSFORD

M.A., F.S.A., F.R.HIST.S.

1862–1926

WHO CONTRIBUTED SO ABLY TO THE

ELUCIDATION OF LONDON'S PAST

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PREFACE

THE purpose of this book is to continue the history of London from the year 457, to which date it had been brought in the volume which appeared last year entitled *Roman London*. In that book the first portion is devoted to a continuous historical narrative and the second to an attempt to recreate, as far as the materials would allow, the life and social conditions of the capital at that early period. Here the same method has been followed, with the advantage of the steadily increasing light of history which enables one, as the centuries roll on, to visualise the happenings in and about the city with more and more detail.

As the chronicles and records become fuller and more numerous Londoners take to themselves colour, movement and speech: one can hear discussions, heated arguments, the yells of mobs, the clash of arms: there are days when one can listen to the roar of tempests which unroof buildings. There are other days when, in the pleasant twilight of June evenings, one can see the half-scared citizens come from their houses to gaze at the darkening sky, in which appears the streaming wonder of a great comet.

Of the marvellous colour, the architectural delights and the pageantry of great occasions one sees so much, if one have the gift of seeing, that it is almost possible, after much study of the records, to feel that one has lived in London long ago when armour was still worn; when a mayor of London knew how to use his "basilarde"; when wandering pigs were a nuisance in the narrow, unlighted and too often unpaved streets; when the Bridge was one of the wonders of Europe—a veritable marvel of stone and timber under which the tides rushed with the force of a mill-race.

The writer has an intense love of London, and that

love grows with increasing knowledge of its wonderful past and of the many relics it has contrived to preserve which, as a rule, lie hidden from the eye of the butterfly-minded citizen who cares nought for the history of the city which has nurtured him, and is in certain aspects, unique among the world's great centres of human life, dead or living.

When one reads of the devastating fires which have so often reduced large areas of London to smouldering ashes and of that vast holocaust described by Pepys and Evelyn, one marvels that there is anything left to remind one of the city of the Middle Ages. It is true that there is little enough. Of woodwork there are the roofs of Westminster Hall and Crosby Hall, the stalls from St Katherine's Hospital Chapel, and a few bench ends from the Temple Church, three or four effigies in Southwark Cathedral and Westminster Abbey, and timber in some of the churches within the walls which survived the Great Fire. Of woven fabrics there are few besides the two marvellously preserved funeral palls belonging to the Merchant Taylors, and even ironwork is comparatively rare.

The bulk of the relics of the city prior to 1485 are of stone—the walls of solidly-built structures, some of them still capable of holding out indefinitely against the wear and tear of the centuries. Then there are a few examples of armour, quantities of pottery, knives, spoons, spurs, bridles, keys, and a number of swords, daggers, spears, axes and other weapons, but here the list almost comes to an end, for it is only towards the close of the epoch that one finds a few shoes and boots.

It is a surprising fact that if one omit the Tower, portions of the domestic buildings of Westminster Abbey, and parts of about a dozen churches, the archæological remains belonging to the thousand years following the Roman epoch—that is, the period covered by this book

—can scarcely be considered more numerous than in the first age of historic London. Inscriptions on stone are actually fewer. There are a very few memorials on brass.

Fortunately there are the city's chronicles and records which begin in the twelfth century and, by the fourteenth, are so full that I have been only able to make a small selection of the interesting items concerning London life with which the records are thickly strewn. Indeed, the task of compressing more than a thousand years of the history of the city into a book of this size has been a difficult one. It has been necessary to touch on many matters which belong to the history of England as a whole in order that the reader may be reminded of the events which had their repercussions upon London. As the Londoner of the time was *au courant* with these national affairs, the reader must be equally informed if he wish to understand the reasons for the events which are here recorded : it does not seem necessary, therefore, to make any apology for taking the reader on several occasions beyond the city walls.

A list of authorities is given in the Appendix : from this the reader will learn the most useful sources for the history of London in the period covered. The City Letter Books are quoted from the printed works in which they were calendered by Riley.

Westminster could not be brought fully into the picture, otherwise the volume would have become too bulky. References to the Abbey and the Royal Palace on Thorney Island are numerous because unavoidable, but no description of events taking place at Westminster nor of the buildings there are given.

In matters relating to the government of London, while certain points which are interesting have been touched upon, no attempt has been made here to go elaborately into the intricate problems of the city's

municipal constitution. To do so would have weighted down the book with a somewhat ponderous mass of material which, while of very great interest to students of the subject, would be tedious to those whose interest is less specialised.

To my friend Lt.-Col. Cecil Row I am indebted for having read the proofs and for having made a number of very valuable suggestions which are incorporated.

The book owes a great deal to the collaboration of Mr Edward Foord, whose aid I acknowledged in the volume on the Roman period of London, which preceded this. His vast and exceptional knowledge of history and the very great enthusiasm he has for London and its past has made his share in the work a vital one.

GORDON HOME

April 1927

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LONDON LYCKPENY

A FIFTEENTH CENTURY POEM

To London once my stepps I bent
where trouth in no wyse should be faynt
To Westmysterward I forthwth went
to a man of law to make complaynt
I sayd, for Marys love, that holy saynt
pity the poore that wold proceede
but for lack of mony I cold not spede.

And as I thrust the prese amonge
by froward chaunce, my hood was gone
yet for all that I stayd not longe
tyll at the kyngs bench I was com
before the Judge I kneled anon,
and prayd hym for Gods sake to take heede
but for lack of mony I myght not speede.

Beneth them sat clarkes a great rout
which fast dyd wryte by one assent
There stoode up one and cryed about
Rychard, Robert, and John of Kent
I wyst not well what this man ment,
he cryed so thycke there in dede
but he that lackt mony myght not spede.

Unto the comon place I yode thoo
where sat one with a sylken hoode
I dyd hym reverence, for I ought to do so
& told my case as well as I coode
how my goods were defrauded me by falshood
I gat not a mum of his mouth for my meed
and for lack of mony I myght not spede.

Unto the Rolls I gat me from thence
before the Clarkes of the Chauncerye
where many I found earnyng of pence
but none at all once regarded mee.
I gave them my playnt uppon my knee
they lyked it well, when they had it reade
but lackyng mony I could not be sped

In Westmynster hall I found out one
which went in a long gown of raye
I crowched and kneled before hym anon
for Maryes love of help I hym praye.
I wot not what thou meanest, gan he say
to get me thence he dyd me bede [offer].
for lack of mony I cold not speede.

Wthin this hall nether rych nor yett poore
wold do for me ought, although I shold dye
which seing, I gat me out of the doore
where flemynges began on me for to cry
" Master what will you copen or by ?
fyne felt hattes or spectacles to reede
lay down your sylver and here you may speede.

Then to Westmynster Gate I presently went
when the sonn was at hyghe pryme.
Cookes to me, they tooke good entent,
and profered me bread wth ale and wyne
rybbs of befe, both fat and ful fyne
A fayre cloth they gan for to sprede
but wantyng mony I myght not then speede.

Then unto London I dyd me hye
of all the land it beareth the pryse
hot pescodes one began to crye
strabery rype, and cherryes in the ryse [on the branch]
one bad me come nere and by some spyce
peper and safforne they gan me bede [offer]
but for lack of mony I myght not spede.

Then to the Chepe I began me drawne
where mutch people I saw for to stande
one ofred me velvet, sylke, and lawne
an other he taketh me by the hande
here is Parys thred, the fynest in the land
I never was used to such thyngs in dede,
and wantyng mony I myght not spede.

Then went I forth by London stone
throughout all Canwyke [1] streete
drapers mutch cloth me offred anone
then comes me one cryed hot shepes feete
one cryde makerell, ryster grene, another gan greete
on bad me by a hood to cover my head
but for want of mony I myght not be sped.

Then I hyed me into Estchepe ;
one cryes rybbs of befe, and many a pye
pewter pottes they clattered on a heape
there was harpe, pype, and mynstrelsye
Yea, by cock nay, by cock some began crye
some songe of Jenken and Julyan for then mede
but for lack of mony I myght not spede.

[1] Candlewick Street, now Cannon Street.

Then into Cornhyl anon I yode
where was mutch stolen gere amonge
I saw where honge myne owne hoode
that I had lost amonge the thronge.
to by my own hood I thought it wronge
I knew it well as I dyd my crede
but for lack of mony I could not spede.

The Taverner took mee by the sleve
" Sir," sayth he, " wyll you our wyne assay
I answered, that can not mutch me greve
a peny can do no more then it may
I drank a pynt and for it dyd paye
yet sone a hungerd frō thence I yode
And wantyng mony I cold not spede.

Then hyed me to Belyngsgate ;
and one cryed hoo go we hence
I prayd a barge man, for God's sake,
that he wold spare me my expence.
Thou scapst not here, q^{d} he, under ij. pence
I lyst not yet bestow any almes dede.
thus lackyng mony I could not speede.

Then I convayd me unto Kent ;
ffor of the law wold I meddle no more
because no man to me tooke entent,
I dyght me to do as I dyd before
now Jesus that in Bethlem was bore
save London and send trew lawyers there mede
for who so wantes mony wth them shall not spede.

This poem is generally attributed to Dan John Lydgate, the monk of Bury St Edmunds, but some doubt has been thrown on his authorship, or the piece may, it is suggested, have been retouched by another hand. The two MSS. which are in the British Museum (Harleian MSS., 367 and 542) are both in writing of the sixteenth century, and one of them is in Stow's handwriting : the other appears to be a little earlier. The title varies in spelling between " Licpenye " and " Lyckpeny," but it is never " Lackpenny," as given by Halliwell in his version (from Harleian MS., 367) reprinted in the Percy Society's publications. In a note he explains that he took the liberty of altering the title, which appeared to him more suitable. Thus the attitude of 1840 ! For this reason an incorrect title is often given to this sparkling glimpse of London life early in the fifteenth century.

I have taken this version of the poem from Harleian MS. 367, which I have followed closely in regard to punctuation and capital letters.

MEDIAEVAL LONDON

CHAPTER I

THE TRANSITION FROM ROMAN TO ENGLISH
A.D. 457 TO 851

About the year 457 Londinium, or Augusta, was still a Romano-British city. Some time before the end of the sixth century it had become politically a part of the still inchoate Anglo-Saxon dominion. During that interval of time the busy capital of a Roman province began the processes which were to transform it into the mediaeval city which is the direct ancestor of London of to-day.

If one could turn back the wheels of Time and make a minute study of the happenings in and about London at the period mentioned, one might possibly find it none too easy to say precisely the moment when the Romanised British port lost the characteristics which it had built up in the course of some four hundred years of fairly steady expansion. It may be that the process was so gradual that no particular moment could be fixed upon as that when the Anglicisation began in a marked degree, but if there were any such date it is probable that it would have been when, possibly for reasons of common sense and general convenience, Londoners and invaders alike decided to suspend further hostilities.

At some time after 457 Londinium became surrounded by the rising tide of Anglo-Saxon immigration; sooner or later it was interpenetrated by settlers and traders of a type very different from those who had frequented it in the days of Constantine the Great and Magnus Maximus and Honorius. The Latin tongue became useless in the midst of people who spoke it not:

merchants and traders had perforce to learn the tongue of the rough farmer-warriors who were doubtless settled close at hand, if not up to the gates, and London became, after a fashion, an English city. But when this process of transformation was finally consummated cannot be determined. London disappears into the mists about the year 457, when, so far as is known, it was still the greatest city of Roman Britain : no glimpse is caught of it again until 597 or a few years later, when it suddenly emerges from the enveloping obscurity, still London, and apparently a large and important city, at which Pope Gregory the Great directs his missionary Augustine to establish an archiepiscopal see.

Therefore the mediaeval history, properly so called, of London may be said to commence when Augustine landed in Kent with his band of forty monks, with intent to bring the English conquerors of Eastern Britain within the pale of Christianity. With the general proceedings of the zealous and energetic, but not always wise or tactful, first Archbishop of Canterbury, this book has little to do : it is concerned with them only in so far as they affected London.

The last ray of light thrown by written history upon Londinium, the Roman city, is that just mentioned as having occurred about the year 457, when the Romano-British army, defeated at the Kentish river Cray,[1] is found taking refuge within the walls raised long before in view of such a contingency. The question as to whether, after this incident, the city was for a time uninhabited is one which must be left to the judgment of the individual.

Britain was not, during the period of the Anglo-Saxon conquest, entirely cut off from the Continent : Theudeberht I., King of the Eastern Franks (533-548), furnished the Emperor Justinian with some information

[1] About two miles west of Dartford.

concerning the island, to which Procopius[1] refers. Clearly he had diplomatic relations with English princes (probably the kings of Kent), for he claimed to exercise some kind of authority over them. It may be that he exaggerated the extent of his influence, but there is the certain fact that Aethelberht of Kent married the daughter of Theudeberht's cousin Chariberht. Intercommunication of some kind there certainly was, and of this more will be said later. If the story told by Bede[2] of Gregory the Great and the English boys in the slave market at Rome be of any value as historical evidence, it must be concluded that prisoners who fell into the hands of the Franks could be conveyed nearly a thousand miles for sale to Italy. The pleasing, fair-haired boys of the story may have been captured or kidnapped in Britain itself. In any case, there is some evidence that intercourse between Britain and the Continent was not entirely broken off, even if it manifested itself only in the slave-trading which was long to characterise certain English ports.

The first relations of the Franks with the English were undoubtedly of a hostile nature. With the Saxons they were almost continually at war down to the time of Charles the Great—and this implies war with the English also. The ambition of the Merovings was to enter into the heritage of the Romans in Gaul, and in a sense they achieved their purpose. As to the nature and extent of their efforts in Britain there is no evidence: probably they were slight. Such as they were, they may very well have been directed to supporting the Romano-Britons rather than the troublesome English and Saxon sea-rovers, who, for a time at least, worried both shores of the Channel impartially—exactly as did the Vikings three centuries later. But on this history is dumb: it is only known that the Merovings before long reduced

[1] *De Bello Gothico*, IV. 20. [2] *Hist. Eccles.*, II. i.

to subjection the Anglo-Saxon settlements in Gaul. There is nothing to show whether these received assistance from their kinsfolk across the Channel. In any case, the Franks had presently to accept the situation in Britain, and the assumption of friendly relations was marked by the marriage of Aethelberht, the most powerful of the English kings, to a Merovingian princess.

It is, of course, by no means improbable that there were Franks among the Teutonic invaders of Britain.

In 597 Aethelberht of Kent had been for some years the suzerain of South-eastern Britain. He was now a man of forty-five and had ruled over Kent for thirty-seven years. In the earlier part of his reign he had been forced to fight for existence with Ceawlin, the famous West-Saxon conqueror; but, after an initial victory, Ceawlin's energies became absorbed in the great war with the Romano-Britons and in civil broils which supervened on a defeat suffered by him about 584. This enabled Aethelberht to extend his influence northward to the Wash, and on Ceawlin's downfall, about 591, over Wessex also. It is likely that the union of the East Saxons and East Angles under his sway was prompted by dread of Ceawlin. The connection between Essex and Kent must have begun at least twenty years earlier, for the reigning king Saeberht was the son of Aethelberht's sister Ricula.[1] Aethelberht was without doubt as completely ruler of Essex as of his own kingdom: Saeberht was his deputy rather than his vassal. The capital of the East Saxons is stated by Bede to have been London.[2]

The check experienced by Aethelberht at the hands of Ceawlin was at Wibbandun[3] (Wimbledon). The place

[1] Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, Bk. II. 3. [2] *Ibid.*

[3] *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, sub anno 568 (probably 576). Although doubt has been cast upon the identification of Wibbandun with Wimbledon there seems no sufficient evidence for questioning it.

of the battle renders it highly probable that the bone of contention was London itself. Two explanations are possible. Either the great city was in possession of Aethelberht, who was defending its approaches against Ceawlin, or one of the kings was endeavouring to forestall the other in occupying it. It would be interesting to know whether, as is perfectly possible, there fought in the army of Aethelberht a brigade of Londoners under the city standard equipped in Roman-fashioned armour, like the men of Soissons or Orleans in the hosts of the Frankish kings. But no English counterpart of Gregory of Tours existed to record his impressions. The Battle of Wibbandun is a fact; and some twenty years later London seems without doubt to have become part of the South English kingdom of Aethelberht. So much is certain: what was happening in London can only be a matter of guesswork.

When the first bishop was established in London about 604 Bede writes of London[1] as a mart of many nations resorting to it by sea and land. While it is possible that he was referring to the state of affairs in his own times rather than in those of Aethelberht, yet an incident described in his History shows that such was certainly the case in 679, and there is no real reason to doubt that about 600 it was a place of importance, deeply declined from its former greatness, and probably much ruined, but with its port still attracting such commerce as could be carried on in those troublous days. This seems to be borne out by the fact that Pope Gregory's instructions to Augustine prescribed the establishment of the archbishopric of Southern England at London and that of the North at York. His directions may have been based on antiquated information derived from Imperial documents still surviving in Rome, but it is just as likely that he had obtained accurate intelligence from traders and

[1] Bede, II. 3.

travellers, and was quite aware that London was the most important place in Aethelberht's dominions.

To what extent Christianity in Eastern Britain survived the English ravages and settlements is a moot point. Its external aspects must, of course, have been well known to the invaders. The remarkable ease with which the land was Christianised, and the total lack of forcible opposition, seems to point to a considerable survival of Christianity of a kind, but, on the other hand, there is a good deal of negative archæological evidence supporting the belief that in Roman Britain Christians were in a small minority, and that the land, as a whole, was passively, if not actively, pagan. That the Christianity of the Romano-British and Welsh princes was of a superficial nature is known from Gildas, and nothing is so certain as that in the sixth century very many Romans of the Eastern Empire merely acquiesced in the faith of the Cross, and were entirely devoid of conviction. Relapses from Christianity into another faith are quite common in history : the people of Crete, when the island was conquered by the Mohammedans in the ninth century, turned in large numbers to Islam and reverted again to Christianity on the recovery of their land by the Byzantine Empire 135 years later.

Aethelberht's Frankish queen, Bercta, who may have married the king somewhere about the year 580, does not seem to have troubled herself about her husband's religion. She was a Christian and brought with her her chaplain Luithard, but probably, like all her house, she was but a nominal adherent of the faith. She and her followers used as a church a Roman building[1] surviving at Canterbury, which they dedicated to the famous Gallo-Roman saint Martin of Tours, but it does not follow that it had originally been built for purposes of Christian worship. Either Bercta was indifferent on the

[1] Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, I. 26.

subject of Christianity or she gave way to other influences, for she allowed her son Eadbald to be reared as a pagan. Nor did Aethelberht make any attempt at forcibly converting his subjects. In fact, despite Bede's glowing narrative, there is very little evidence as to the existence of more than a small, if growing, Christian congregation in Kent and London. Indeed London, owing to its commercial relations with such people as the Frisians, who were fiercely heathen, was perhaps more indifferent than many places.

However that may be, Saeberht of the East Saxons followed the example of his uncle, and in 604 Archbishop Augustine ordained Mellitus, one of his companions, as Bishop of London, while Aethelberht laid the foundations of a church dedicated to St Paul, the forerunner of the Cathedral of to-day. The site chosen in the western half of the city is notable. This quarter may have been depopulated and in a partially ruinous state. It may be that the foreign merchants and traders in London had something to say in the matter. Possibly Mellitus selected the most imposing site which offered itself, and, if masons were hard to find, he would have been more or less obliged to select a structure whose walls were fairly complete. Thus, if a dilapidated and perhaps roofless temple of Diana or some other member of the Roman pantheon which stood conspicuously on the hill above Ludgate were available, its selection would not have been in the least improbable.

Bishop Mellitus presided over his see for twelve years, but with what success is not known. There is evidence that his influence and that of the king gathered around them a considerable Christian congregation, but it is clear that among the East Saxons themselves the faith made little headway, whatever may have been achieved among the Londoners themselves. Though Saeberht became a Christian, his sons, including his heir Sigeberht,

remained heathen, and his death involved the collapse of the frail edifice which he and his bishop had reared. The first remarkable incident on record concerning St Paul's is given by Bede,[1] who describes how Mellitus, while administering the Eucharist to the communicants in the cathedral, was interrupted by the new king and his brothers, who came tramping into the church with the demand, "Give us of that white bread!" a demand, of course, refused by the bishop.

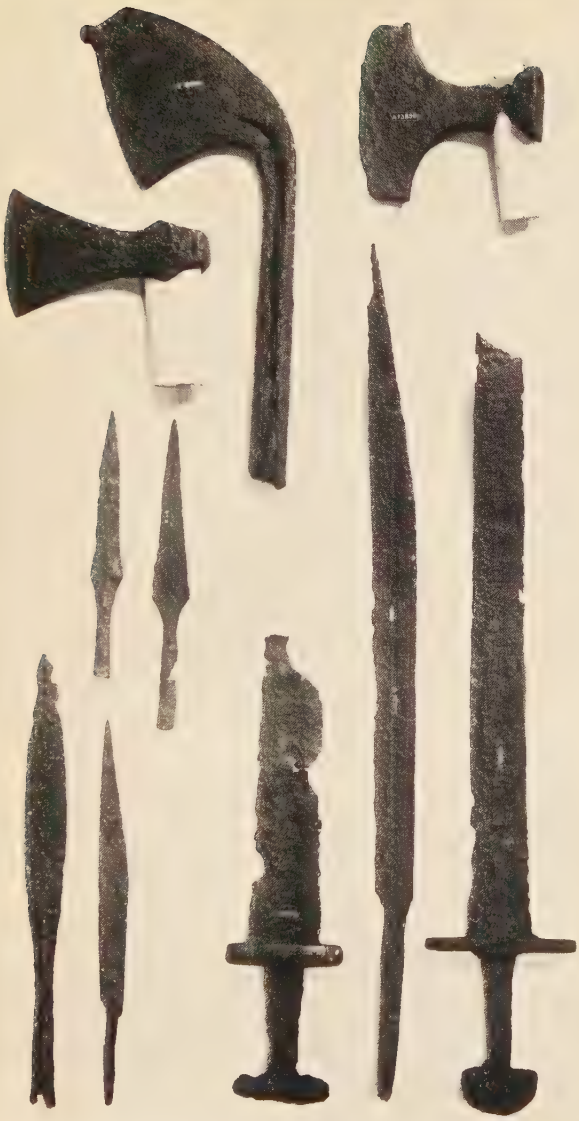
"You gave it to our father: you are giving it now to common folk. Why refuse it to us?" demanded the royal party.

Mellitus replied, "Your father accepted Christian baptism, and therefore gained the right to partake of the holy bread. If ye also will enter into the font, ye will be able to eat the bread of life."

"We will not be washed in the font," was the rough reply, "for we need it not—but that bread we will have," and, on the resolute refusal of the bishop, they drove him and his followers from their kingdom. Bloodshed there was none, but for the present there was an end of Christianity in London. Bede's words do not seem to convey the impression that the community was a very numerous one, but perhaps he means that only the bishop and his immediate assistants were expelled.

After this scene in the first cathedral of St Paul the twilight once more falls upon London. King Sigeberht became involved in hostilities with Kynegils, King of the Gewissae (West Saxons), and was slain in battle together with his brothers, an occurrence at which Bede rejoices greatly. But he is constrained to admit that their tragic fate had no salutary effect upon their subjects: Sigeberht's son, who bore the same name, preferred to continue in the faith of his fathers. The Saxons of Britain seem throughout to have been more

[1] Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, II. 5.



Anglo-Saxon Period Weapons.

Found in or near London.

(*London Museum.*)

steady in the worship of Woden than the Angles. Possibly this was largely a question of national pride, the conquerors objecting to adopt the religion of their slaves and vassals. At this period London's commercial relations were, as already mentioned, largely with the Frisian and other heathens, and it seems likely that Christianity slowly decayed. There may have been, for all that is known to the contrary, a perceptible Christian community in the city, but the references are so scanty that very little can be deduced from them, and of archæological evidence there is none. But in any case Christianity ceased to be countenanced by the ruling race in London, and probably the cathedral of St Paul fell into great disrepair if not ruin.

For many years history is completely silent in regard to London. It may have fallen under the influence of Kynegils and his son Cwichelm, who had slain Sigeberht I.; but when, in 633, the great Mercian King Penda became supreme in the south of England, London was probably attached to Mercia. As a matter of fact it would seem that it always pursued a curiously independent path, making its own terms with whatever power chanced for the time to be the dominant one in its vicinity. The rulers of its cosmopolitan inhabitants probably attached more importance to the continuance of their overseas commerce than to their precise political status, and were quite content to pay tribute to the most powerful potentate of the time so long as they were at liberty to gain their livelihood by trade.

From 633 to 823 the suzerain power in Southern England was, except for an interval of about forty years, Mercia, and Mercian influence was predominant in the city. How it was exercised is unknown, but London was certainly regarded as a Mercian city down to the time of Alfred. The slight references in Bede—as has been already mentioned—show that it was a place of

much commercial activity. In one place he calls it a "mart of many nations"; elsewhere he notes that a Mercian ealdorman sold his prisoners of war at London. It was plainly enough the focus of all the continental trade of Mercia, such as it was—probably also of a great part of that of Wessex, Essex and East Anglia.

That it passed early out of the sphere of the East Saxons seems also to be indicated by Bede. He tells how, after some forty years of heathendom, during which they had probably been considerably harried by the Mercians, the East Saxons again received the Christian faith. This is how the pious Monk of Jarrow puts the matter.

Actually it seems that Sigeberht II., seeking a stay against Mercia in the person of King Oswy of Northumbria (at this time only of Bernicia), consented to be baptized and to endeavour to Christianise his subjects. He obtained the aid of Cedd, the brother of the yet more famous Ceadda (Chad), whose pure and saintly character was successful in making many converts. But it is noteworthy that the centre of his activity seems to have been the isolated and remote Roman fort of Othona ("Ythanceastir"), on the marshy shores of Essex. There is no mention of London, and, since Bede would hardly have omitted to celebrate so momentous an event as the reconsecration of the derelict church of Aethelberht and Mellitus, it must be concluded that Sigeberht II. had no authority over the city on the Thames. Cedd is usually reckoned among the bishops of London, but it is very doubtful if he ever exercised any ecclesiastical authority there.

The first actual bishop of London, after the interval of heathendom which followed the exile of Mellitus, was probably Wini (or Wine), a person of somewhat dubious reputation. He had been bishop of the Gewissae, but, falling out with King Coenwalch, fled to Mercia and,

according to Bede, procured from King Wulfhere, for a money payment, the appointment to the see of London, which he held until his death in 675.[1] To purchase ecclesiastical elevation was and is regarded as a highly scandalous transaction, and the name of Wini does not appear among those of the bishops present at the pan-Anglican Episcopal Congress held in 670 at Hertford, under the presidency of the famous Archbishop Theodore of Tarsus. He must, however, have satisfied Theodore that the charges against him were without foundation, for the energetic Primate, who more than once deposed prelates who did not reach his high standard, did not deprive Wini.

King Wulfhere was gathered to his fathers in 675 and Bishop Wini died in the same year, so that London saw a new king and a new bishop within a brief space of time. The new bishop was Waldhere, by his name a Mercian. The overlord of London was now Aethelred, the brother of Wulfhere, who reigned for twenty-nine years.

In his sixth year he ratified the charter of the Abbey of Peterborough, and among the witnesses was Bishop Waldhere. Aethelred was for several years able to maintain the suzerainty of Wulfhere in Southern England. He put down a revolt of the men of Kent, and held his own against his rival Ecgfrith, the warlike king of Northumbria, but about 685 his power began to decline before the advent of a very active and warlike young king of Wessex, Ceadwalla, who conquered Sussex, the Isle of Wight and Kent, all of which had hitherto been dependencies of Mercia. It is interesting to note that he was a pagan.

After three years of desperate warfare and savage cruelty towards his opponents, Ceadwalla was smitten with remorse and went to Rome, where he was baptized and almost immediately died, but his kinsman Ine, who

[1] Bede, *Hist. Eccles.*, III. 7.

succeeded to the throne, carried on his work with energy. The power of Mercia was cut short, and the suzerainty over Southern England passed to Ine, who secured possession of London about 690. In a charter some years later he calls Earconwald, who had succeeded Waldhere in the see, "my bishop," a phrase which indicates that his control of the city was complete. He held it until his death about 706.

It would be interesting if there were any record of Ine's connection with London, but the scanty authorities are dumb. That the famous warrior and lawgiver often visited the city may be regarded as certain, and his celebrated code, which throws such light upon the state of England in those days of transition, was probably promulgated there no less than in Winchester and the other towns of his dominions.

With Ine's death the power of Wessex fell like a house of cards. In 716 there came to the throne of Mercia Aethelbald, a monarch of great energy who, as soon as Ine had passed away, took in hand the task of restoring the empire of Mercia. Wessex had fallen into anarchy amid the contests for supremacy of rival princes, and Aethelbald not only recovered the overlordship over London, Kent, Essex and East Anglia, but presently reduced Wessex also to vassalage. For twenty years he was supreme in Southern England, and his power seemed so firmly established that he called himself King of the Southern English—as distinct from the Northumbrians, who successfully maintained their independence under their last great king, Eadberht.

During this period of peace London may have advanced considerably on the path of prosperity, for not only was Southern Britain becoming more or less united under Aethelbald's strong hand, but on the Continent, after a century of weakness and anarchy, the Frankish Empire was being reunited and reorganised by the famous

Charles Martel and his sons. And as trade is an essential of life among peoples at a certain stage of development, the result must have been a considerable revival of commercial activity. Doubtless, according to Roman standards, the total volume was comparatively small, and London itself would have appeared as a dilapidated wreck to a reincarnated fourth-century citizen who had resided in it in the days of its glory, but a suggestion of prosperity is afforded by the legendary magnificence of the cathedral of St Paul,[1] erected or restored by Bishop Earconwald (*circa* 690).

Aethelbald's " empire " collapsed with curious suddenness in 752 when Cuthred, King of Wessex, rose in revolt and defeated his suzerain in a great battle at Burford in Oxfordshire. Precisely what effect Aethelbald's overthrow had upon London is unknown : to all appearances Cuthred conquered Sussex and Kent, and established his relative Eahlmund as vassal king of the latter country, but of London there is no word. Can it be that, even at this time, the city was so important and obvious that to write of it was subconsciously considered unnecessary ?

The victor died within two years of his triumph, and Wessex lapsed quickly into impotence and intestine strife. Aethelbald, indeed, after his overthrow at Burford, seems to have fallen into apathy and became so unpopular that he was murdered in 757 by his personal retinue, but his death cleared the way for a greater man—his cousin Offa, who completely restored the glory of Mercia, and, during his long reign of thirty-nine years, raised its power to a higher pitch than it had yet attained. He recovered the vassal kingdoms, though he permitted Eahlmund to retain his nominal sovereignty in Kent, and reduced Wessex to subserviency by a great victory in 775 at Bensington near Oxford.

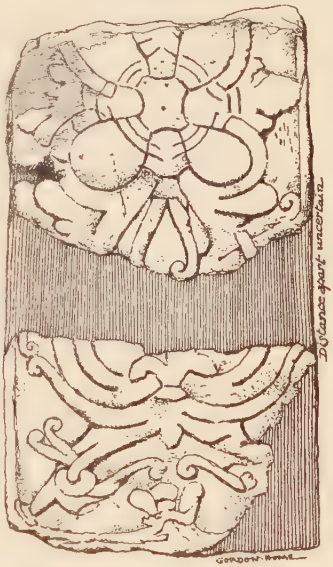
[1] Dugdale's *Hist. of St Paul's*, 1818 edition, p. 3.

In the strong hands of Offa and his successor Coenwulf I. the supremacy of Mercia endured for more than sixty years: its reality, although absolutely ignored by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, is proved by the fact that Charles the Great entered into close diplomatic relations with Offa. The two kings corresponded, apparently on terms of perfect equality, and, amongst other things, concluded a treaty regulating the passage of English travellers and traders across France to Italy and Rome. Normally their relations seem to have been friendly: there may have been occasional differences, but the peace between them was unbroken. The Frankish monarch probably considered himself very much the superior of the Mercian; but the power of the latter was concentrated, and the economic condition of his realm was very possibly much better than that of Charles. As Green justly observes: "Secure on either border, his kingdom wealthy with years of peace and order, and his armies fresh from victories over Welshman and Kentishman, Offa was no unworthy antagonist for Charles the Great."

There is actually no reason to imagine that Charles ever meditated hostilities; his interests and ambitions were elsewhere, and, though his sympathies may perhaps have been with the men of Kent in their efforts to regain independence, he was not disposed to provoke a war on this account even had he been less deeply engaged in Germany, Italy, Spain and Hungary. The friendly relations between the two monarchs continued to the last, and when, in 791, the Frankish armies captured the palace camp of the Avars in Hungary with its accumulated masses of plunder, Charles sent Offa, among other valuable gifts, two "Hunnish" swords. One must record such facts, for there can be little doubt that correspondence and gifts from Charles to Offa and *vice versa* passed through London: it may very well have been in London that Offa donned the precious silken

mantle, the gemmed baldric and the crooked Hunnish sword which were probably the last gifts which he received from his Frankish friend.

Thus the eighth century ended in peace and prosperity for London without any warning of the approaching storm, though no doubt the traders of the city were not long in hearing the evil news from Northumbria—how the "heathen men" (the Northmen) had sacked the sacred monastery of Lindisfarne in 793, and in the following year the abbey of Jarrow, where the Venerable Bede had lived and taught. But Northumbria was far away: it was known to be in the last stage of dissolution, rent by civil strife and exhausted by bad government, and though men in London might deplore the destruction of Lindisfarne and Jarrow, they probably did not foresee any threat to their own city, flourishing in the long peace and, apparently, secure within the protection of Offa. When the last Taghlak king of Delhi heard that the terrible Timur was marching against his capital, he is said to have remarked, "*Delhi dar ust.*" (= "It's a far cry to Delhi.") No doubt the average English trader thought much the same. It was a far cry from Lindisfarne to London, and Offa was strong and near at hand—so they forgot the Viking and continued to devote their thoughts to commerce.



ANGLO-SAXON INCISED TOMB SLAB FOUND IN LONDON.
(*British Museum.*)

They were perhaps wise in their generation. Offa was

near his end, but his successor Coenwulf was hardly less vigorous and active, and in any case forty years were to pass before the Northmen seriously menaced England. The Vikings were, in fact, devoting most of their attention to distracted and faction-ridden Ireland and to weak and divided Scotland. They came very near to turning both countries into Norse kingdoms, and they did convert the entire North of Scotland and practically all its islands into Viking states which complicated the country's history in later centuries. Busy in Ireland and Scotland, and even more so in the now declining empire of Charles the Great, they left England alone, following the line of least resistance, wherein they were wise, for England put up against them a fiercer and more successful fight than did any other country in Europe.

When the last great king of Mercia died in 821 the greatness of that kingdom fell almost at once. The subject states rose in rebellion, with Ecgberht of Wessex, the son of Eahlmund of Kent, at their head. Kent, Sussex and Essex passed quickly under his sway ; he was joined by the East Anglians and reduced once mighty Mercia to vassalage almost without a struggle. The part played by London in the strife is obscure, but its political position is clear enough. It certainly was not a city of Essex : when the Danes attacked London it was the vassal-king of Mercia who came to defend it. There is ground therefore for assuming that it was a distinct city state dependent primarily upon Mercia, but preserving its own separate existence.

Wessex had struck down Mercia : now the Northmen came swiftly to smite down the newly-won supremacy of Wessex. In 833 a small Viking squadron ran into Charmouth and the crews held their own in a skirmish with Ecgberht's guards. But when, in 836, a large fleet came to Cornwall and raised it in revolt, Ecgberht fell upon the incongruous allies on Hingston Down and defeated

ANGLO-SAXON AND VIKING BATTLE-AXES, SPEAR-HEADS, KNIVES, AND A SWORD.

Found at or near London.
(*London Museum.*)

them thoroughly. He died victorious and in peace, but in the year after his death the squadrons of the sea-rovers began again to trouble the shores of England. A cryptic entry in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* under the year 839 (it should be 842) refers curtly to "great slaughter in London." What this may mean is quite uncertain. No mention is made of the Danes, but as they were busy on both sides of the Channel in that year (842), it has been assumed that this is the record of a Viking raid. What actually happened is not ascertainable, but nine years later London was English and important enough to be defended by the forces of Mercia. A reasonable conclusion is that there was a raid of some description, but that it did not result in the destruction of the city.

The crisis came in 851. Various minor squadrons suffered defeat, but the main fleet numbering 350 ships under a certain Rorik (possibly he who founded the Norse empire of Russia) swarmed unopposed into the mouth of the Thames. They put their crews ashore possibly at Reculver, and stormed Canterbury.[1] The spoilers then re-embarked, sailed farther up the Thames, landed on the north bank and marched upon London. Nothing whatever is known of any preparations made in the city itself. Possibly little could be done in the time available. The walls may have been allowed to become ruinous, no foreign enemy having approached the gates for roughly three centuries. If the wall along the river front, which seems to have had no bastions, had fallen here and there through the action of the tides and had not been adequately repaired, it was very likely such spots which allowed the assault to succeed. Beorhtwulf, king of Mercia under the suzerainty of Ecgberht's son Aethelwulf, came in haste with such levies as he could collect to protect the city, but the army of Wessex hurrying from the south-west was unfortunately unable to arrive in time.

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 851.

The Mercians were routed and put to flight,[1] and London was stormed and sacked.

The exultant Vikings now crossed the Thames into Surrey and made for Winchester, with intent to make an end of the High King of England, but this time they had reckoned without their host. The army of Wessex encountered them on the Stane Street at Ockley,[2] and totally defeated them. What became of the fleet at London is not known: most probably it fled in haste with its depleted crews.

From the military point of view the sack of London was well avenged. But the destruction of a wealthy commercial city cannot be made good by a mere victory in the field, nor can it be doubted that, by the sack of 851, London suffered a blow from which it did not recover fully for generations—perhaps centuries. Most probably it was now that it lost much of whatever Roman characteristics it had retained: many of its finest buildings which had survived four centuries of vicissitude would have emerged from the sack as blackened and roofless wrecks. There must also have been a terrible slaughter of the inhabitants.

The Northmen, according to all historical records, signalised their victories by unrestrained killing and licence, and thus there can be little doubt that dreadful scenes of carnage and rape took place. Those inhabitants who had not left the city in the first stages of the attack would have been at the mercy of the fierce Vikings. In the midst of smoke and fire, fiercely-wielded swords must have fallen mercilessly upon the non-combatants driven from their houses by the flames. The blood of Londoners flowed down the streets in streams

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, also Asser's *Life of Alfred*, sub anno 851.

[2] The location of the battle of Aclea has been much discussed, but Ockley in Surrey seems the most probable. The alternative site is Church Oakley in Hampshire.

and rivulets until the conquerors' lust for killing had exhausted itself.

If the London of the ninth century had contained a large proportion of wooden buildings, the great conflagration which the storming would inevitably have brought about must have buried the streets and byways deep in the debris of fallen walls, calcined stone and charred embers. It is probable that only a few of the more important streets were recovered when reconstruction gradually took place, and if this were so, the loss of the street plan of Romano-British Londinium may be more directly attributable to this disaster than to any antecedent cause.

More than any other event which is recorded by history, that of the black year 851 forms a definite dividing line between the earlier and the later fortunes of London.

CHAPTER II

THE DANISH DESTRUCTION AND THE PERIOD BEFORE THE NORMAN CONQUEST

851 to 1066

After the defeat of the Vikings at Ockley, followed by their temporary departure, the condition of London must have been miserable indeed. One may picture it as ruinous, partially burnt out and half depopulated by the slaughter, enslavement or flight of so many of its inhabitants. There is no evidence of what efforts were made to revive it, but there was little hope of any real recovery, for with the Vikings ranging the Channel and ravaging England and Frankland impartially, commerce must have been all but impossible. One may justifiably regard London for many years onwards as a greatly decayed community, depending very much upon whatever intercourse could be carried on in the country itself; a place with areas of gaping devastation within the breached Roman walls; a place where grass and tall weeds grew lustily on the heaps of fallen building materials which buried many of the streets; where fine Romano-British buildings stood roofless and dilapidated, with rubbish accumulating within, and with its inhabited quarter possibly restricted to the area nearest to the bridge. The fall of roofs and walls in part or completely, together with the natural accumulation of debris and decaying vegetation, would comparatively quickly have raised the level of the streets.

Over this ruined and poverty-stricken semi-desolation brooded the Danish menace. King Aethelwulf, a brave fighter and an estimable man, was "ane sair saint for the crown," and two years after Ockley, *i.e.* in 854, he took it into his devout head to go on pilgrimage to Rome![1]

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 854.

He stayed there for a whole year; and while he was passing his time in more or less misplaced devotions and expending his treasure in rich donations to St Peter's, a Viking horde came up the Thames and wintered in Sheppey. Then, however, in their erratic fashion, they swerved off to France and did not return until 860.

When they did so, however, it seems to have been with the deliberate intention of making an end of England. In Wessex itself they were beaten off after sacking Winchester, but they ravaged Kent, then East Anglia, and, in 867, stormed York and conquered Northumbria. Their first attempt to subdue Mercia in 868 was repulsed, because King Aethelred of Wessex and his brother Alfred hastened to the aid of Burhred of Mercia. But in 870 they were back again, overran Mercia, wasted East Anglia, slew or murdered its subject-king Eadmund, and, early in 871,[1] flooded across the Chilterns to Reading intent in making an end of Wessex.

Now they found to their cost what Englishmen in desperate straits could do. First their advance guard was defeated at Englefield (west of Reading), and, though the Vikings succeeded in beating off a bold attempt of Aethelred and Alfred to storm the camp at Reading, they were, four days later, heavily defeated on Aescdown (Ashdown). It seemed as though complete destruction would be the fate of this particular horde, but in the moment of defeat another Viking fleet made its way up the winding reaches of the Thames to London. This time there is no record of fighting and probably none occurred; the derelict city's scanty population would scarcely have been able to defend the breached walls. The Danes doubtless refreshed themselves with a due allowance of arson, pillage, murder and rape, so far as anything and anybody remained whereupon they could sate their savage appetites; after which they went

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 871.

on to Reading, rallied the remains of the "*here*" (army) defeated by the men of Wessex and marched forth to crush their weary enemies.

After a very hard struggle they beat the King and his brother at Basing in Hampshire and then at Marden. Immediately after the second action the brave King Aethelred died, and Alfred, beaten at Wilton, was forced to conclude peace at the price doubtless of a heavy subsidy. The Danes were probably pleased: though they could fight well at need, they preferred to buy plunder a little less dearly, for their present success had been purchased at the price of a king, nine jarls and thousands of warriors. King Alfred, at the cost of some sorely-needed money and a great humiliation, had procured for himself a respite. It would be a short one, for the Vikings were perhaps the blackest perjurers in all history, but a year in the hands of Alfred was worth five employed by a weaker man.

King Halfdene and his pirates, having sustained in Wessex many hard knocks and found small booty, were disposed to go where the hammering was lighter and cash more plentiful, so they turned their faces to London and encamped among its ruins for perhaps a year.[1] Apparently King Burhred of Mercia, hopeless now of aid from Alfred, paid them blackmail to keep quiet, and it was presumably out of the silver so secured that Halfdene struck a coinage—the first Viking coinage in Europe. Perhaps the work was done by captured moneyers. A curious feature about the mintage is that the coins are barbarised, but not absolutely bad, copies of Roman pieces. Possibly all through the period 457-872 London had kept and used the privilege of coining its distinctive money and its surviving experts were now forced to place their resources at the disposal of their new barbarian master. If so, there would have been definite continuity

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 872.

between the mint of Roman London and the coining which took place in the city four centuries later. It is hard to believe: the difficulties in the way of acceptance of the theory may be great, yet it is not altogether impossible. In any case, Halfdene did celebrate his brief reign in London by the issue of a coinage, and that coinage was on a Roman and not on an English model.

Next year Halfdene and his host went forth to harry and subdue Mercia and what remained of Northumbria, and of London no more is heard for fourteen years. Its history is an absolute blank, and archæology makes no contribution towards filling the gap. Indeed, archæology in regard to this period of London's history is able to add only the very smallest fragments of information. The city must have been more or less in the power of the Danes, for they were raiding and blackmailing all over Eastern and Northern England, and, after 877, definitely settled in Eastern Mercia and East Anglia. They may have occupied London for a time as a fortress, for they were keenly appreciative of the advantages of fortifications, but during these dreary years there can have been little civic life and less commercial intercourse.

The Vikings were ranging about Western Europe, burning and despoiling far and wide: those of them who had settled in England were disposed to join their fellows on the high seas at any moment and for any reason or apparently none at all.

In 885 a stray Viking host, which had been bribed to depart from France, drifted into Kent and besieged Rochester. It is quite probable that some of this fleet came up the Thames to London and berthed their ships there. This horde was promptly attacked and driven to sea by Alfred, but the mischief had been done: the Danes of East Anglia, who hitherto had listened to the counsels of their Christianised king, Guthrum, now turned out in arms and had to be coerced.

The campaign focused on London, which Alfred determined to recover. No leader possessed of strategic insight could fail to see the enormous importance of the lost city. So long as the Vikings held it they had an open road for their boats into England by way of the Thames, while by means of the indestructible Roman roads radiating from it they could attack north, south, east or west at will. But with London once more in his hands Alfred could to some extent control the situation. The open waterway up the Thames would be barred, and not the Danes but Alfred and England would possess an unrivalled base of operations against invaders from without and enemies within.

A GOLD AND ENAMEL BROOCH, POSSIBLY OF THE TIME OF ALFRED, FOUND IN UPPER THAMES STREET NEAR DOWGATE HILL.

About 1½ *inches in diameter.*
(*British Museum.*)

Therefore, in the momentous year 886, Alfred directed all his strength to the recovery of London, and succeeded. Whether he besieged it or whether he entered it after a battle under the walls is not definitely stated.[1] Asser[2] says that there was great slaughter and that the city was burnt. It may be that the Danes, after their usual custom, waged a defensive action within the walls and were driven out after a bitter street fight, in which, as a matter of course, many buildings were further damaged or destroyed. Probably much of whatever remained Roman within the ramparts was devastated, but Alfred's victory was complete. London, the bulwark of South-eastern England, was English once more. The disaster

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 886.
[2] Asser's *Life of Alfred*, sub anno 886.

brought the Danes of East Anglia to sue for peace, by the terms of which the boundary between Englishman and Dane was advanced to the River Lea.

The great King now set to work with the utmost energy to secure the recovered city. The fortifications were roughly but thoroughly restored—traces of the rude English patching may be discerned to this day[1]—and the wasted population was recruited by large drafts of settlers from other parts of Alfred's domains. Without much fear of being in error one may suppose that many of the new inhabitants were men who had lost all at the hands of the destroying Northmen and were bitterly determined to defend their new homes to the last drop of their blood. Repairing no doubt went on within the walls as well as upon them, and, before long, London assumed the aspect if not of a flourishing centre of trade, at all events of a well-populated and well-fortified frontier town. It must have presented a quaint and somewhat bizarre appearance. Here, perhaps, there might be seen a tolerably intact Roman edifice—some mansion or business house whose solid walls, although reddened or blackened by fire, had nevertheless defied the Danish torches and rams—with its roof patchily restored with ancient tiles and wooden shingles, while alongside might be the timber dwelling of an English thegn who paid for it by military service on the walls and in the field.

There seems no doubt at all that the bridge was restored, for a few years later the Danes are found to be unable to pass the city. London was now probably more English than it had ever been before. Repaired as a bulwark against the Vikings, its population recruited by drafts of colonists from all Southern England, it stood forth strong and confident once more.

[1] A good example of this is still to be seen in a yard to the east of Trinity Square, immediately to the north of the Tower.

To commemorate his victory Alfred struck coins in the city bearing on the reverse the monogram of London. Again, one is struck by the distinctly Roman and un-English type of the pennies : they are quite unlike the coins of Alfred's successors. The execution is fair : the head of the king is evidently a portrait, wherefrom it appears that the noblest and best of all the monarchs of England was a thin-faced man with a high aquiline nose —a very distinctive facial type which seems to have been peculiar to the royal line of Wessex. Apparently he wore his hair short.

The time was now at hand when London and its citizens (*burh-ware*) were nobly to justify the prescience of their King. In 891 the Northmen who were ravaging the Continent were totally defeated at Louvain by the warrior monarch Arnulf, King of the Eastern Franks. This rude check decided the Vikings to try their fortune again in England. They intrigued both with their kinsfolk settled in Northumbria and those whose homes were in Mercia—the Five Burhs—and East Anglia. The fleet of dragon ships which made for the shores of England in 893 numbered 330, and carried perhaps as many as 14,000 warriors, of whom a proportion were provided with horses. With them they brought numbers of their women and children.

With this new danger there immediately appears the result of the revival of London. On former occasions the Vikings ran up the Thames, settled themselves in the devastated city and spread out from it like a fan in whatever direction booty lay. But now it stood solidly in their path with its well-manned grey and red walls and with its bridge astride the Thames. Clearly the Viking chiefs had to arrange their plans to meet the altered situation. But that was not easy. Every coast-line town of any importance had been fortified and garrisoned, and it was difficult to find any place where they could

land unopposed. Further, King Alfred had organised the *land-fyrd*—the armed levy of the kingdom—and had mobilised a competent force with which he stood ready to advance as soon as a threatened fortress rang the alarm.

London was in the special care of Alfred's son-in-law Aethelred, Ealdorman of Mercia, who governed so much of Offa's great kingdom as had not been seized by the Danes. To Aethelred the King had given his noble daughter Aethelflaed, presently to be famous as the Lady of Mercia. The references to this most remarkable princess, although meagre, are sufficient to reveal her as in some sort an English Jeanne d'Arc, a successful leader of armies and taker of cities, and, what is more, a great administrator.

The Vikings, in this war, appear from the outset at a disadvantage—a very unusual condition. The fact is that for the first time in their destructive career they were face to face with a powerful defensive organisation directed by a great warrior. Also it is fair to remember that Alfred was nobly assisted by two able and dauntless lieutenants—Ealdorman Aethelred and his own eldest son Eadward, a vigorous and capable young man with a full share of his father's military ability.

The main Viking fleet started from Boulogne and ran across to the Kentish coast, where it was at once held up by Dover and her sister fortresses, so that it had to feel its way westward until it found an undefended landing-place. Such a spot it presently discovered near Lympne, and there a horde of plunderers landed only to find itself in a most awkward position. The one Roman road inland led to Canterbury, which was fortified ; fortresses lay to right and to left of it along the coast ; the forest region called Andredsweald, lying to the west and north-west, was difficult to penetrate, and Alfred's advance guards were keenly watching the woodland tracks, ready to notify the King at once of any movement along them. The second division of the fleet, consisting of eighty

ships under the famous Haesten, sailed into the Thames and was almost at once brought equally to a standstill. The Kentish towns were fortified and garrisoned. Rochester was guarded: into Kent or up the Medway Haesten could not go without resistance. Right across his forward path stood London, stern and menacing. Up the Thames, therefore, he could not sail any more than up the Medway. In fact, the Danes had run up against a formidable and fully-prepared defence.

From Southampton to London the *burh-ware* stood to their arms. Ealdorman Aethelred made ready to come up to the aid of London with his Mercian levies, while King Alfred was somewhere on the London-Winchester road with a compact army, prepared to hasten at brief notice to any point of danger.

In short, so far as these continental Vikings were concerned matters were now nearly at a complete deadlock: their hopes rested chiefly upon what their allies from Northumbria and East Anglia might be able to achieve. A fleet of 140 ships raised by the Danes of these two regions concentrated in the Irish Sea and fell upon Devonshire. The success of this move was, however, only partial: King Alfred, indeed, marched away to the west with part of his army, but he left Prince Eadward and Ealdorman Aethelred in Surrey with a force quite capable of dealing with their opponents. However, as soon as he had departed both the Great Army in Kent and Haesten on the Thames put themselves in motion. Haesten prepared by establishing a new base at Bemfleet (Benfleet in Essex), where he was in close touch with his allies in East Anglia, and here he collected his own squadron and the main Viking fleet which came round from Lympne. Evidently it was the design to effect a junction on the Thames.

But now appeared the stumbling-block—London. The strong city completely barred the way up the

Thames. Haesten had to strike up far to the northward, losing touch with his base camp, while the Great Army had to attempt what would now be called a wide turning manœuvre. It was constrained to push painfully westward through the Andredsweald forests, avoid, if possible, the English army in Surrey, then turn northward and, crossing the Thames somewhere on its middle course, move on to join Haesten in the Midlands. It was a hazardous plan, but there was no alternative. If the Great Army had joined Haesten at Bemfleet, Eadward and Aethelred would simply have planted themselves in advance of London and the result would be stalemate and famine. The Danes lived by pillaging the countryside; if they concentrated they starved. They must get together somewhere in a body large enough to bear down resistance and also find new fields for plunder. To the execution of this plan London opposed a formidable obstacle.

However, the Danes made the attempt. Haesten burst out of Bemfleet, circled far north of London and plunged into Mercia, which had no system of *burhs*. He moved westward ravaging and slaying, while the Great Army made its way through the Weald to Farnham and turned northward, only to be set upon and routed by Aethelred and Eadward, so that only scattered bodies crossed the Thames. The English pursued and besieged them in a fortified camp on the Colne, but, running short of provisions, had to abandon the blockade and retreat to London. But inaction was far from their thoughts. The Prince and the Ealdorman only stayed long enough to replenish their men's haversacks and then, taking with them a strong detachment of Londoners and some reinforcements from the West, marched upon Bemfleet. They routed the Vikings, stormed the camp, made prize of its whole accumulation of plunder, stores, women and children, and captured the entire fleet—probably from

two hundred to three hundred "dragons" and transports. It was a very great success.

Haesten returned from his *razzia* into Mercia to discover that his base camp, his fleet, his stores, plunder and the families of himself and his followers were gone! One may imagine the pride and joy of the gallant Londoners when they saw the captured "dragons" towed into the Pool and trains of Danish captives plodding through their streets.

During the next two years the tide of war swept to and fro north of London, but never reached it. Haesten raided again and again across Mercia into Wales, until at last, in the summer of 894, it seems to have become impressed upon him that nothing decisive could be achieved so long as the great fortress barred his way westward. He might raid Mercia, but he could not attack Wessex, and wherever he went he was invariably opposed by English forces. So, late in 894, he called to him the Viking fleets from the west, and with them and the vessels which had joined him from other quarters pushed up the Thames and entered the Lea, thus directly threatening London. But London was strong and its citizens were confident and brave. The winter passed into spring and no advance was made by the enemy. Early in the summer the commandant of the city called up to his aid the levies of the neighbouring counties and marched boldly forth to attack the redoubtable Haesten in his entrenchments some twenty miles up the windings of the Lea. The Londoners had, however, miscalculated his strength; the English were repulsed, and among the slain were four royal thegns. Though a repulse, the affair was not a disaster; the Vikings made no attempt to advance on London, and the attitude of its defenders was so threatening that the Danes could not interfere with the cultivation of the fields.

In the summer the tension came to an end, for King Alfred, now relieved from all fear of an invasion in the west, marched up with a large army and encamped in advance of London. The ripe crops were harvested and garnered, and then the whole army set to work to deal with the Danes. The passage of the Lea was forced and forts built on both banks, thus penning the Viking fleet in the river. The game was up. Haesten and his men abandoned their camp and streamed north-westward, pursued by Alfred and the main body of the English army, while the Londoners were left to destroy the

A Bronze Mount from a Casket of the Viking Period.

The Runic inscription, according to Von Grienberger, reads :—
SBERÆDHTIBUAI ERHADÆBS
which he translates :—"Erhadus episcopus assequitur viam caniculae."
Canicula was one of the Roman names for Sirius, and thus the inscription may mean that Bishop Erhadus pursued the way of the bright star.
Found in the Thames at Westminster.
(*British Museum.*)

works and guard against any return of the enemy. For the second time within three years they triumphantly towed a captured fleet into the Pool.

This success was virtually the end of the war. The Vikings, disheartened and half-starved, held out during the winter at Quatbridge-on-Severn, but there was no spirit left in them, and early next year, when Alfred was summoning his army to the attack, they gave up and dispersed. "Thanks be to God," says the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, "the enemy had not entirely broken the English people." It might well be said that the English had broken the Northmen. A most formidable onslaught made in great force and assisted by the Danes

settled in England had been decisively beaten off. And in that victory London had played a notable part. The restored city had proved the barrier which the Viking could not overleap.

When, in 896, Haesten the Viking departed vanquished from England, owing his wife and children to the generous clemency of Alfred, London, after ten years of rebuilding, preparation and warlike toil, settled down to a comparatively peaceful existence. Not that there was peace in the land, for after Alfred's death, in 900, his son Eadward the Elder, strenuously aided by his brother-in-law Aethelred and his famous sister Aethelflaed, set himself to complete the great King's work by reducing to vassalage the turbulent and unstable inhabitants of the Danelaw. The men of London must have taken their part in this glorious recovery of lost provinces, which ended not only in the absolute and complete reconquest of Eastern Mercia, Essex and East Anglia, but also in the formal, if not very real, vassalage to King Eadward of the entire North, including Strathclyde and Scotland. It was, no doubt, mainly the Londoners who stormed Tempsford in 916,[1] slaying the Danish king of East Anglia, and they must have formed the core of the army which shortly afterward recaptured Colchester. But, though the tide of war was more than once within two or three marches of London, it did not come up to its walls: a hundred years were to elapse before the city again saw a foe at its gates.

Happy is the land which has no history—no history, that is, of blows and strife. The notices of London now become scanty. Heahstan, the bishop, who had probably been installed by Alfred at the restoration of 886, lived long enough to see the Vikings expelled from England and died in 898, two years before King Alfred. The great Ealdorman Aethelred continued to be the

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 920.

city's governor until his death in 910, when King Eadward took it under his own direct rule. After this little is heard of the city by the Thames: there is nothing but the certainty, with or without record, that it was once again populous and flourishing. Western Europe was slowly settling down after the Viking ravages, and there

A Danish Monumental Stone found on the South-east Corner of St Paul's Churchyard.

It bears in Runic characters the inscription "Konal and Tuki caused this stone to be laid."
(*Guildhall Museum.*)

was, no doubt, a certain revival of overseas commerce. From 959 to 961 its bishop was no less a person than St Dunstan.

In 961 a double misfortune fell upon London of the same nature as that which was to come upon it seven centuries later. There was a disastrous outbreak of plague, or at any rate a severe epidemic disease of some kind, and also a great fire which devastated St Paul's

Cathedral. It was promptly restored by the energy of the citizens, but it is not known whether St Dunstan's well-known artistic talent was employed on the new building. As he was made Archbishop of Canterbury in the same year it is not likely that he had much to do with the work. His successor at London was Aelfstan, whose name appears in King Eadgar's charter refounding the Abbey of Medhamstede (Peterborough), destroyed long before by the Danes. Dunstan signed first among the prelates; then Oswald, Archbishop of York; then Aethelwald; then Aelfstan. The order is interesting, as it indicates a rivalry between London and Winchester, and that the latter, being the capital of the English King's patrimony of Wessex, claimed the priority.

To Eadward the Elder succeeded the yet more renowned but not abler Aethelstan; to Aethelstan his warlike brother Eadmund I., and to Eadmund his invalid but most able and energetic brother Eadred. There was the interlude of the handsome self-willed youth Eadwig, whose matrimonial vagaries produced the remonstrances of St Dunstan; then came the sixteen years' rule of Eadgar the Peaceful, which marked the acme of the renown of the great West Saxon dynasty. England was great among the nations; secure on every side; its monarch acknowledged as suzerain by all the princes of Scotland and Wales. It seemed as if a lasting Anglo-British Empire had already been established which was to unite the whole island beneath its sway. But this was an illusion. It is not necessary here to discuss the causes of the decay which was already setting in during the brilliant reign of Eadgar, but it would certainly seem that the English nobles had acquired too much power, that the people at large were politically depressed, and there is some indication that the peace and prosperity of the country brought into it a large number of foreign adventurers whose influence was not always for

the best. One obtains the impression that there was a good deal of this element at Court, and that it was largely responsible for the miserable mismanagement and humiliation of the reign of Aethelred "the Redeless." There is indeed reason to think that so soon as Eadgar was dead the nobles took up a position of local independence and that strife among them was common. Aethelred II. was, no doubt, an unworthy descendant of the great Ecgberht and the greater Alfred, but he was probably as much sinned against as sinning. Also during the long peace Englishmen had become unaccustomed to warfare.

Disaster fell upon London very early in the ill-starred reign of Aethelred the Redeless (or Ill-Counselled), for, in 982, there was a great fire which caused havoc in the city and probably swept away very much of whatever distinctive traces of its Roman architecture had survived. This disaster synchronised with a piratical raid on the Isle of Portland, one of several about this time which were the harbingers of a tremendous Danish onslaught of a kind differing very much from those of earlier times, since it was led by kings of Scandinavia intent on founding a powerful northern Empire. To include England, by far the richest country in north-western Europe, in this empire was a very natural ambition. Its realisation was facilitated by the unprepared state of the country, the weakness of the King and the gross disunion and often open disloyalty of the heterogeneous nobility.

The history of the miserable years 980-1016 cannot be described here in detail. It may be summed up in five pregnant words—invasion, devastation, disunion, treason and blackmail. Hardly ever was anything like organised resistance attempted; when, at last, the effort was made it came too late, and treason played its part in frustration.

The true commencement of the attack came in 991. Olaf Tryggvesson, heir to the crown of Norway, and

Sweyn (Svend) "Forkbeard," King of Denmark, were both exiles and had formed a short-lived alliance. In 992 Aethelred *and the Witan*—the words are somewhat significant—decided that an effort should be made to meet the invaders at sea, and a great fleet was collected at London. One almost feels that it was the strong influence of London which forced the measure upon the King and his unruly counsellors. Evidently London was very much to the fore, and the aged Bishop Aelfstan was actually one of the admirals.

Apparently the citizens thought that only a revered and patriotic churchman could act as a counterpoise to the treacherous nobles, especially the commander-in-chief—the unstable and cowardly Ealdorman Aelfric. It is said that this highly-placed scoundrel betrayed the plans of his fellow-commanders to the enemy: certain it is that the hostile fleet, though caught at a disadvantage, succeeded in escaping. After this the English armada dispersed, but the squadrons of London and East Anglia kept together and fought an indecisive engagement with the enemy. The vessel which had been Aelfric's flagship was captured, but the action was certainly not very favourable to the Danes, for nothing is heard of further operations in that year.

Two years later, for the first time since 885, London saw the face of an enemy. Olaf and Sweyn with ninety-four ships appeared in the Thames, determined to capture the city and open a clear way into England. Evidently, like many enemies in later years, they had a poor opinion of "cowardly clerks and mean mechanics" living in towns, and so the desperate resistance which they encountered surprised them greatly. They established a blockade and, on September 8, made a furious attempt to storm the city, perhaps employing incendiary compounds, the use of which some of them may have learned during military service in the Byzantine army. It must

not be forgotten that many of the warriors of the roving Scandinavian armies had seen service in the foreign brigade of the Imperial Guard of Constantinople. Whatever the methods employed, the assault failed completely; the fierce sea warriors received a stern reminder of what the men of London could do—"more slaughter and harm than they ever supposed that townsmen could inflict."[1] Naturally the Londoners ascribed the victory to the intercession of the Virgin, since September 8 is her natal day in the Calendar of the Church. The success of London had no effect upon the shiftless King and his Witan, who bought the enemy off with a blackmail of 16,000 pounds of silver. The money enabled Olaf and Sweyn to recover their kingdoms. The oddest thing concerning the transaction is the fact that Olaf agreed to become a Christian and actually took an oath never again to trouble England. The Anglo-Saxon chronicler remarks, with evident surprise, that he kept the oath. He went home to establish himself as King and to Christianise his people, often by sufficiently violent methods, and, after a strenuous reign of five years, was slain by his former ally, Sweyn, at the battle of Svold in the Baltic.

He was not the canonised Olaf who certainly commanded mercenaries for Aethelred against Sweyn some twenty years later, and whose name is preserved in several English churches of St Olave and also in Tooley Street. The canonisation did not take place until 1164.

But England saw little peace. Nearly every year there were ravaging incursions of greater or lesser magnitude, all alike resulting in devastation and pillage and all feebly opposed. They were all probably inspired by Sweyn, and after the death of his rival, Olaf, he could again take the lead in person. His efforts never really ceased until, in 1013, he could call himself King of England. It was, however, sheer disgust with Aethelred and his favourite,

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 993 or 994.

the iniquitous Eadric "Streona" (the Grasper), which brought about the submission of the country. After events showed that its power of resistance was still great. But between crass incompetence and absolute treason the national energy was wasted.

It is clear that the sharp lesson of 994 had had its effect. For a long time the Danes made no attempt upon London. Their ravaging expeditions swept north and south of the stubborn city and into its rear, but they did not attack it. Whenever one can get a glimpse of London during those disastrous years it is always in the forefront of resistance. When, in 1009, the huge fleet which had been collected against the invaders broke up owing to the intrigues of the infamous Eadric, the crews, deserted by the King and the nobles, *rowed them back to London*, where at least they were assured of welcome and patriotic support. More than once the Danish raids came up to the outskirts of the city but with no success: "Glory be to God, that it yet standeth firm, and there they ever met with ill fare."[1] Once at least, when the Danes sacked Oxford and ravaged the valley of the Thames, the Londoners collected an army to march to the relief of their countrymen. The enemy evaded them, but they must have realised something of the strength and the steady hostility of the great city which had already baffled them, and which they were not to enter by force.

In 1012 London had the melancholy honour of receiving for burial the mangled remains of Aelfheah, Archbishop of Canterbury, the St Alphege to whom the church in London Wall, among others, is dedicated. The murder of this prelate by the Danes is perhaps the blackest stain on their somewhat unpleasant reputation. At the time Eadric Streona was actually in London paying over a huge blackmail, and the gorges of the stout

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 1009.

Londoners must have risen in disgust when they saw the body of the brave and unselfish Primate borne through their streets to its temporary resting-place in St Paul's, and reflected that half of the 48,000 pounds of silver now handed over to the murderers would, properly expended, have equipped an army capable of repulsing them. A curious consequence of the affair was that the Danish chief Thorkill the Tall, who led this particular expedition, entered the service of Aethelred with forty-five ships. It is not easy to understand his motives, but perhaps he thought that, as an active leader of mercenaries, he would thrive better under weak Aethelred than strong and ruthless Sweyn. Possibly also the better part of the pirates were ashamed of the murder of the Archbishop. But the whole miserable affair seems, for the time, to have disgusted the Londoners utterly with their shiftless monarch.

This appears to be proved by the events of the following year when Sweyn, evidently annoyed by the independent proceedings of Thorkill, came with the full force of Scandinavia to establish himself in England. First Northumbria, then Mercia, last, Wessex, submitted to him with or without resistance and he marched against London, which held its own in full fight against him "*because therein was King Aethelred, and with him Thorkill.*" The statement is interesting because it appears to show that even London had had enough of Aethelred "the Ill-Counselled" and Eadric "the Grasper," and would have acknowledged Sweyn but for the presence of Thorkill the Tall and his mercenaries. Certain it is that, before long, one finds Aethelred and Thorkill no longer in London but at Greenwich, and that London, last of all England, has given hostages to the Dane. Thorkill made his peace with Sweyn, and Aethelred took refuge with his brother-in-law Duke Richard of Normandy—grandfather of William the Conqueror.

The submission was brief: Sweyn died in February 1014, and Aethelred's loyal and long-suffering subjects sent to him in Normandy. The message is pathetic enough. "No king was dearer to them than their natural lord *if only he would rule them better* than before."[1] It certainly appears that it was London which took the lead in this forlorn appeal. Aethelred came and generally abode in the city, while his fleet, which evidently included many Danish and Norman mercenaries, lay at Greenwich. For two years he contested the possession of England with Sweyn's son Cnut amid mismanagement and treachery, and throughout it is clear that London was his one pillar and strong stay. When, in 1016, Cnut made what was to be the decisive effort, and an army was collected by Prince Eadmund, the levies dispersed: they would not move, they said, unless they had the King *and the Londoners* with them. The end of a hectic and almost unintelligible period of confusion, extending over about two years, was that Wessex, Mercia and Northumbria submitted once more to the Dane, and Aethelred fled to London, where he died on St George's Day (April 23), 1016. Of his Witan there remained with him only his heroic son Eadmund; of all his once wide kingdom only one faithful city—London.

And yet, with London as his single base, Eadmund Ironside, in his remarkable campaign of 1016, won back half of England from the Dane, and might, had he lived, have recovered all. Cnut was already marching upon the faithful city. Eadmund left it to be defended by its gallant inhabitants, while he rode forth, almost alone, to gather an army of relief. His success was remarkable. Reaching Wessex he collected forces from the homeland of his house, defeated one Danish army at Penselwood, and a second, under the traitor Eadric Streona, at Sherston, crossed the Thames and marched to the relief

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 1014.

of London. This was at the beginning of July—some two months after he had departed for the west.

All through those two desperate months London, environed by Danes, Mercians and Northumbrians, had been defending itself bravely. The fleet of Cnut had its headquarters at Greenwich, and the Danish king apparently began by attempting to force the bridge. When this failed, the Danes made a practicable waterway through the marshes of Southwark and hauled their lighter ships into the Thames above the bridge—doing on a small scale what Hannibal had already achieved at the siege of Tarentum and what Sultan Mohammed the Conqueror was afterward to achieve at the siege of Constantinople. When this had been effected, Cnut set his men to surround the city with a rampart and trench and opened a regular siege, but the citizens, fighting as stoutly as in the days of Alfred, as stoutly as they had fought against Cnut's father and Olaf Tryggvesson, frustrated all the Dane's siege devices and repelled every assault. And at the very height of the siege King Eadmund appeared from the west, burst through the lines of the besiegers and broke up the leaguer.

Cnut then collected his army on the south side of the Thames, but only two days after entering the city Eadmund set forth again, forded the Thames at Brentford, defeated Cnut, who endeavoured to hold the line of the river, and forced him to retreat eastward. The energetic King then hurried off into Wessex once more to raise fresh levies, and Cnut, undaunted by defeat, returned to the blockade of London, but the reappearance of his rival with his victorious army strongly reinforced obliged him finally to raise the siege.

It is sad to record that this most gallant and glorious defence did not save England for the House of Alfred. Eadmund defeated Cnut again at Otford in Kent so severely that the double traitor Eadric Streona deserted

again to the side of his countrymen. But Cnut made a final effort by landing in Essex, and at Assandune (on the Crouch) the last and foulest of Eadric's desertions gave the Danish claimant the victory. The result was that Eadmund had to consent to a partition of England following, roughly, the lines of that between Alfred and the Vikings in 878, but with the addition to himself of Essex and East Anglia.[1] No doubt the heroic English King would have renewed the struggle had life been granted him, but a few weeks later, on November 30, 1016,[2] he died.

After his death the nation had no choice. With heavy hearts and deep forebodings, no doubt, the assembled notables acclaimed in London the young Dane[3] as King of all England. As is known, he proved both a good and able monarch and identified himself in a remarkable manner with the people upon whom he had imposed himself by force. At first, indeed, the worst forebodings seemed likely to be justified by a whole series of executions. Secondly, Cnut had a horde of unruly mercenaries of which to rid himself, and to do this he raised a huge contribution from the country. It seems remarkable that, after so many years of warfare and devastation, England could produce in one instalment 82,500 pounds of silver. Of this—for the age—gigantic sum, 10,500 pounds were contributed by London alone. Thus, this single city, with perhaps 40,000 inhabitants or less, was reckoned, for purposes of taxation, at one-eighth of the entire kingdom! With the money which had been raised, Cnut paid off almost the whole of the disorderly host, keeping with him only

[1] *Florence of Worcester* (revised text), sub anno 1016.

[2] The *A.-S. Chron.* states simply that he died, but popular opinion, as voiced by Henry of Huntingdon, gives it that he was murdered by an assassin sent by the hated Streona.

[3] He was about twenty years of age in 1016.

enough picked and reliable men to man about forty ships. These crews constituted the famous hus-carles or household troops, practically the first standing army maintained by a king of England.

One of Cnut's executions must have caused unfeigned delight to the Londoners—that of Eadric Streona, which took place in London itself. Cnut had made the traitor Earl of Mercia, but he must have felt that he could never trust the man, and was doubtless determined from the outset to be rid of him. The story is[1] that one day the betrayer of Aethelred and Eadmund came into the King's presence as he sat with Erik Haakonson, the famous Norwegian, whom he had made Earl of Northumbria, beside him. Cnut said: "Can you, the man who betrayed your late master, become my faithful servant? I will repay your service with the reward which you have deserved, but never try treachery again." Then, turning to Earl Erik, he observed grimly: "We must pay this man what we owe him, that is to say, he must be killed, lest he deceive us again," whereupon Erik, without more speech, swung his axe and cut the "Streona" down. It was rough justice—"lynch-law"—and the manner in which it was administered was undignified for the monarch of three nations, but that it was what Streona deserved cannot be doubted.

Six years later England's great Danish King was in London, and figured in a ceremony less grim than the "lynching" of a double-dyed traitor. It was the solemn translation of the remains of the martyred Archbishop Aelfheah from St Paul's to Canterbury. The coffin was, doubtless for reasons of additional solemnity, taken across the Thames on shipboard attended by the King, Archbishop Aegelnoth, and a brilliant train of ecclesiastics and laymen, including all the chief magnates, both English and Danish, except Thorkill the Tall, who would

[1] "Encomium Emmae," II. 16, *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 1017.

no doubt have been anxious to pay honour to the remains of the Primate whom his men had wantonly slain, but was absent as Viceroy of Denmark. The body was delivered to the care of the Archbishop at Southwark, and carried by Rochester to Canterbury, where it was interred on the north side of the high altar of the Cathedral. Thus London sent the first martyred Archbishop of Canterbury to his home. There was presently to be a second—on that occasion a Londoner born.

The story of Cnut and the rising tide, associated in the minds of most people with the sea, belongs, if an old Norman poem may be trusted, to the Thames at Westminster. Henry of Huntingdon, the earliest authority, however, mentions no place.

This is all which is actually recorded of King Cnut with reference to London, but that he was often in the city is not doubtful: it was the headquarters of the standing navy of forty or so ships which he maintained, and their crews—"Lithesmen" as the English called them—must have been prominent among the throngs in the narrow, busy streets. Very possibly they formed a distinct quarter outside the western gates along the Strand, using the churchyard of St Clement Danes as their burial-ground, although the name of the church may be, as tradition declares, as ancient as the days of Alfred.

Cnut died in 1035 supreme, either directly or indirectly, over all Britain and Scandinavia. His son Harold, borne to him by his mistress, Aelfgifu, an English woman, was chosen King by the Assembly of England north of Thames, and the Lithesmen in London. The vote of London clearly went a long way. But neither the careless athlete and hunter Harold, nor his free-living successor Harthacnut, made any mark as kings, and when the latter ended his reckless life while drinking at a feast at Clapham, the thoughts of the nation turned to

Eadward, the devout son of the "redeless" Aethelred by Emma the Norman, who had returned to England at the invitation of his half-brother. The council which invited him to accept the crown was held in London—"all men chose him for king in London."[1]

For twenty-four years this last and strangest figure in the great West Saxon House reigned, but did not rule, in England, and London must often have seen the handsome face with its flowing beard and hair and faintly-tinted womanly cheeks of the last of Alfred's line, who, as Green truly says, glides as a shadow over the stage. The story of England under Eadward the Confessor is really the story of great Earls, Godwin of Wessex, Leofric of Mercia, Siward of Northumbria.

Whatever the position of London, politically speaking, may hitherto have been, Eadward the Confessor and his advisers recognised its pre-eminence now. In the preamble of a law, it is expressly designated as "London qui caput est regni et legum, semper curia domini regis."[2] A more comprehensive and final statement cannot be imagined.

Nine years after his accession (in 1051), King Eadward came into violent collision with Earl Godwin, the latter having refused to punish Dover on account of the brawl which its townsmen had had with the insolent retainers of Eustace of Boulogne, Eadward's brother-in-law. To all appearances the townsmen were in the right, but Godwin put himself in the wrong by peremptorily disobeying the royal orders. The result was civil war. Godwin and his sons, Harold and Sweyn, levied forces from Wessex and issued an insolent summons to the King to deliver up Eustace and his followers in chains. This was more than the meek "Confessor" could endure, especially as his sympathies were with his brother-

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 1042.

[2] Thorpe, *Laws of Edward the Confessor*, p. 196.

in-law. He called on Earls Leofric and Siward for loyal support, and they came, but, though they were not fond of the overbearing Godwin, and quite ready to fight him, they were not inclined to wage civil war on account of a detested "Frenchman," and they endeavoured to negotiate a settlement.

A meeting was appointed in London, and thither from Gloucester went the King with Leofric and Siward, while Godwin occupied Southwark. It was north arrayed against south. But fighting there was none. The Southerners had no desire to wage war against the seed of Alfred, even though it favoured foreigners. Godwin's army melted away, and the night before the day appointed for the conference he and his sons, finding themselves without support, absconded. Once away from London, they collected their forces anew. A confused period of intrigue followed and then the King, still in London with his army about him, held a second council on September 22, at which Godwin and his house were outlawed. Godwin and three of them fled to Flanders, while Harold went to Ireland. To conclude the matter, the King repudiated his nominal wife Eadgyth, Godwin's saintly daughter, and interned her in a convent. His triumph seemed assured, and later in the year his cousin, William, Duke of Normandy, paid him a visit of congratulation. So, for the first time, London saw the tall powerful figure and handsome face of the man who was presently to be its king.

The chronicler waxes eloquent over the sudden fall of Godwin, who had ruled the King and all England, whose daughter was the King's wife and his sons the King's "darlings." But within a few months there was a wonderful change; the hand of the foreigner was too plainly apparent in the late clash: men said what they thought—that the King's heart was Norman, and when Godwin came back to claim his own, he was joined by

many who might not love him, but hated Eadward's foreign friends more. Once again it seemed that London would be the centre of civil war. In the city was the weak, yet obstinate King, with his French friends—Robert of Jumièges, the first Norman primate; William, the Norman bishop of London; Ulf, the bishop of Dorchester-on-Thames, and others.

The Londoners themselves had plainly no real heart in the royal cause, for they allowed Godwin's fleet to "shoot" the bridge on the flood-tide—a manœuvre which they could certainly have prevented had they so chosen, for there were fifty ships ready for action outside the river wall of London. The rebel army then landed and drew up in battle array across the Strand, opposite Ludgate and Newgate, while the fleet formed up on the Thames. But again there was no fighting: the *Chronicle* says flatly that the royal forces declined to fight against Englishmen for the sake of foreigners.

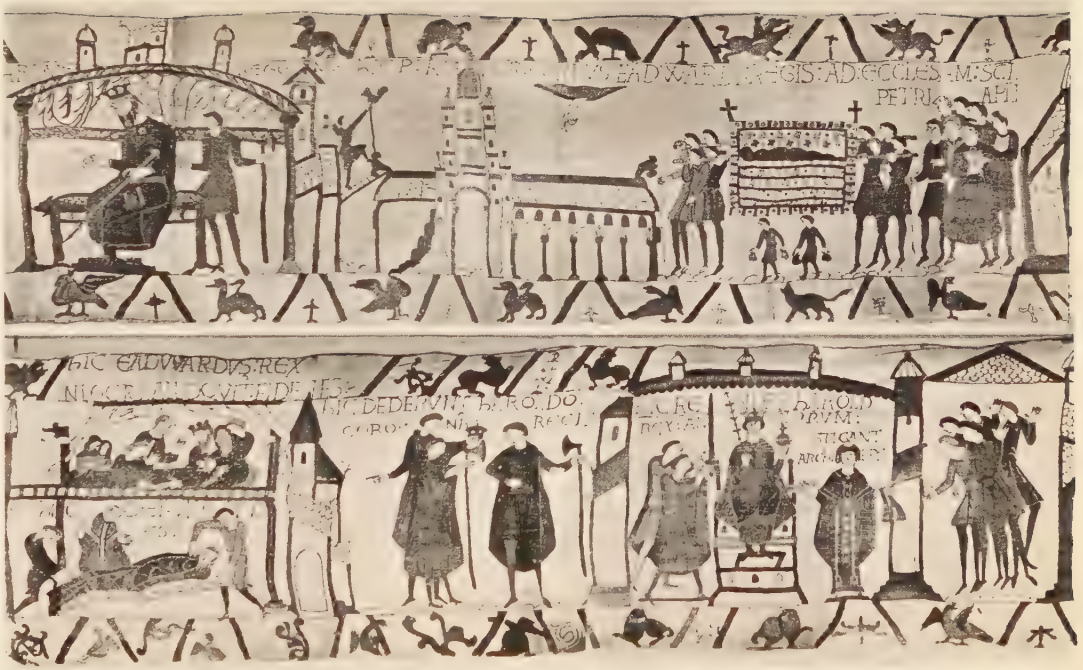
The helpless monarch agreed to negotiate, and the Frenchmen determined that, at any rate, they would not be massacred like rats in a trap. They gathered together, rode to Aldgate and cut their way gallantly out despite the resistance of the guards—unbishoplike but, one must admit, plucky. Then a conference was held outside the walls and every measure of the last year was reversed. All the Frenchmen were outlawed, and Godwin and his sons reinstated in all their honours. Most amazing of all King Eadward complaisantly took back his wife! One cannot help imagining that there was more in all this than meets the eye, for the King was simply as wax in the hands of the stronger party for the time being. In the previous year he had been moulded by his French companions, by Eustace of Boulogne and William of Normandy: when they were gone the strong-handed Godwin again seized control and impressed his own mould upon the plastic nature of his nominal ruler.

Now peace and prosperity resumed their sway in London, after a temporary cessation. Very little is heard of the city during the next fourteen years. First Godwin, then his greater son Harold, ruled the land in the name of the King; and, except for border wars on the Welsh frontier, the land had peace. One event directly connected with London is recorded in these quiet years: in 1057 the King's nephew Eadward, the surviving son of Eadmund Ironside, came to London after a long life in exile. It seems to have been the intention of King Eadward (or rather Earl Harold) to proclaim him heir apparent as a counter to the claim of William the Norman that Eadward had promised him the succession at his visit in 1051. There was also another claimant, Sweyn Estrithson of Denmark, who declared as positively as William that the Confessor had promised him the succession. Young Eadward, however, died almost immediately after his arrival and was buried in St Paul's. "Alas," moans the chronicler, "that was a rueful time and harmful to all the nation that he ended his life so soon after he came to England to the ill fortune of this wretched people." The implication is clear enough.

Londoners lived in peace, traded and grew rich; the religious King appointed bishops and abbots of his own choosing when he could, and devoted most of his time and means to the building of his splendid abbey at Westminster, portions of which survive to this day; while Earl Harold ruled and fought the Welsh. Bishop William, expelled in 1052, was soon allowed to return to his see. He was respected and liked, and lived long after the Conquest.

"Until," as the poem in the *Chronicle*[1] says: "suddenly came bitter death and this king so dear snatched from the earth." But the poet also exults in the fact that the

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 1065.



A Portion of the Bayeux Tapestry illustrating the Demise of Eadward the Confessor and the Coronation of Harold II. by Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury.

The representation of Westminster Abbey in the upper section—its correctness cannot be judged—shows all that is known of the Confessor's great church. The royal palace of Westminster is correctly placed in relation to the eastern apse of the Abbey Church. On

prudent monarch had settled the crown on the noble Earl Harold Godwinson, "who had ever obeyed his lord in word and deed." Harold was crowned, but "little peace had he therein," for the news roused William of Normandy to furious wrath. One must believe that William was sincere in his belief that Eadward the Confessor had recognised him as his heir; he would hardly understand that the crown of England was elective and by no means at the disposal of the reigning monarch. The struggle ended, as all know, in the overthrow and death of Harold on Senlac Hill.

With the story of 1066 this book is concerned only in so far as it touches London. It was at London that Harold established his headquarters, and there, in May, he gathered the largest army and fleet which any king of England had ever collected. The whole huge force was moved down to the coast of Hampshire and there it lay until its provisions gave out and the ships, weather-beaten, with crews hungry and disease-stricken, came straggling back to London. The city perhaps saw Harold as he started northward to crush the Norwegian Harald Hardraada and his own rebellious brother Tosti, certainly he was in London on his rush southward to face the dreaded Duke of Normandy. It was but for a short time; he waited only to rally the stragglers of his forced march and went on his way to his last field. With him, under Esegar[1] the "Staller" (Marshal), went the citizen soldiers of London, moving out to their last fight beneath the Dragon banner of the House of Alfred. They marched forth across the old timber bridge and few of them ever saw their city again.

There were days of anxious suspense, but there may have been little fear of the result. Thinking men may have shaken their heads and said that the King should have waited for the troops of the Northern Earls Eadwine

[1] Sometimes spelt Ansgar.

and Morkere before marching out to battle. But all his life Harold had been successful: he had conquered the Welsh; he had destroyed the warlike Hardraada and his host, and of the Normans and their great Duke Englishmen knew little.

Then the blow fell suddenly, without warning. Across the bridge began to come, in those days of mid-October, groups of fugitives from the battle on Senlac Hill to tell the story of the catastrophe. After a time Esegar the Marshal, badly wounded, was borne across the bridge into the city and then the worst was known. King Harold and his brothers were dead, and with them had fallen almost every man of note in south-eastern England, together with the greater part of the army which had made so gallant a fight against William's death-dealing archers and his squadrons of mail-clad cavalry. The outlook was dark: there was the ugly prospect of another siege, for as yet there was no thought of yielding.

The Earls Eadwine and Morkere had come up with the levies who had been too late for Hastings. Ealdred, Archbishop of York, was there, Esegar the Staller, and brave men enough had there been leaders worthy of them. Eadgar the Atheling, the last of Alfred's house, was proclaimed king by the citizens of London, and Eadwine and Morkere professed loyalty. The city was strong: it had repelled Haesten and Olaf and Sweyn and Cnut time and again: with the forces of the north to strengthen its own diminished body of citizen soldiers it might be confident, even though the inhabitants saw the houses of Southwark burning as the army of William marched up the Thames seeking a passage. It must have seemed of good augury that he did not attempt to storm the bridge. But when the news came that the host of the invader had appeared at Berkhampstead and the citizens saw Eadwine and Morkere hurriedly desert

them, hope ebbed away. London was true to the House of Alfred, but the North deserted her. Thousands of her best soldiers had fallen at Hastings, and there was no choice but to yield. So to William's camp at Berkhampstead there went a deputation consisting of Ealdred, the Archbishop, the Earls, Eadgar, the young uncrowned king, and all the best men in London. They "submitted them for need when the most harm was done," says the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, and continues: "It was very ill rede that they did not so before, seeing that God would not better things because of our sins. And they gave him hostages and took oaths: and he promised that he would be a faithful lord unto them." Thus the crown of England passed from the House of Cerdic to the House of Hrolf the Norseman, and Duke William entered London, with his army, to be crowned king.

CHAPTER III

NORMAN LONDON

When, in writing the history of London, one reaches the year of the Norman Conquest, it might be supposed that the curtain, now fully drawn up, would reveal the whole stage. On the contrary, this is far from the truth, for throughout the period of the Norman kings the amount of definite history concerning the city is astonishingly small. That London filled an increasingly important place in the affairs of the kingdom is clear enough, and in spite of disastrous fires it was obviously becoming richer and more populous. Imposing buildings were being erected of which one of the most important still forms a part of the silhouette of the metropolis, but so little beyond the barest references to the year of their commencement or the date of a disaster to one of them is recorded, that one is still looking, as it were through a thinning mist, upon a London which begins to present familiar features, but as yet little beyond pale outlines.

Apart from the survivals of Romanesque architecture of the Norman period, William's famous confirmation of London's liberties, and sundry other documents, it is almost impossible to point to any objects which unquestionably belong to London of the century following the Norman Conquest. Archæologists have to confess themselves baffled in regard to the pottery, and indeed to nearly all domestic objects of this period. Scarcely anything discovered in London can definitely be assigned to it. Even weapons which may be called Anglo-Saxon or Danish may equally well be Norman and belong to this period. It was an age when epigraphy was almost entirely restricted to coins, and therefore the archæologist is heavily handicapped. Further, there are no sites in England which were deserted soon after the

Norman period and thus nearly all pottery and metal objects which have come to light in excavations in the city are only datable within astonishingly wide limits.

Concerning the terms upon which William the Conqueror gained possession of London, there is a story told by the Norman-French chronicler, Guy of Amiens. It is to the effect that William, afraid of the strength of the city, sent a private message to Esegar the Staller (=Marshal), asking nothing more than that his right to the English crown be acknowledged : if that were conceded, Esegar might exercise the supreme power. The Staller, hoping to outwit the Norman, consented, but William so flattered and bribed the deputation of Londoners that they made no feigned submission but a real one.

The story may contain a germ of truth, but one fears that it is too good to be true. A man of William's type would not have been likely, even for a moment, to surrender any particle of his rights, and it is not probable that Esegar possessed sufficient authority to conclude an agreement on his own responsibility. The importance of the story is in the light which it casts upon the position of London and the anxiety of William to gain control of it by peaceful means rather than by force. It is probable that the city was ready enough to welcome him. There was then, as always, a considerable foreign element within its walls, and the natural interest of the community would incline them towards a ruler who was known to be firm and strong and capable of keeping the peace. The acceptance of any other candidate would unquestionably have led to war both internal and external, for Sweyn Estrithson of Denmark was known to be a claimant, and might at any moment appear in arms in support of his rights. The aged Bishop William was also a Frenchman, and undoubtedly lent his aid in the negotiations.

The transition from West Saxon to Norman domination was far more easy in London than elsewhere, and

seems to have passed off smoothly except for the rather incomprehensible disturbance outside the Abbey during the coronation at Westminster, which was perhaps due to nervous tension. William would have been unlikely to overlook the fact that the city was wealthy and capable of giving him strong financial support if friendly, whereas a sullen population might be perpetually obstructive.

A soldier of William's capacity was not likely to overlook the strategic importance of London. With it in his hands he held England: without it his position might well be endangered. Therefore one of his first acts was to establish a Norman garrison in a castle at the south-east angle of the city's Roman walls. It was perhaps at first, like all William's fortifications, of the mound and bailey type; not until twelve years later, *i.e.* in 1078, was the building of the huge keep commenced by William's prelate-architect, Gundulf of Rochester. It is commonly supposed to have had as its only object the overawing of London, but William certainly had also in mind the strengthening of the defence of the city in view of a possible Danish invasion—an event well within the bounds of probability. That William, whatever the goodwill of the citizens—and there is no hint of any disaffection—should prefer to have at hand a guard of his own countrymen is natural enough. His desire to conciliate the city is shown by the charter, or rather confirmation of rights, which he granted to it at the commencement of his reign. The charter, literally translated, is as follows:

"William, King, greets William, Bishop, and Gosfregth, Port-reeve, and all the burghers within Londone, French and English, friendlike. And I give you to know that I will that ye be all those laws worthy that ye were in King Eadwerde's day. And I will that every child be his father's heir after his father's day. And I will not

THE CITY SCEPTRE.

This remarkable relic of London's civic insignia is of uncertain age. There are no early references to it, and yet from the setting of the pearls, which Mr A. W. Franks held to be of Byzantine form, and from the gold alloy, which expert goldsmiths have stated to be unlike anything made since the Norman Conquest, there are grounds for attributing the sceptre to Anglo-Saxon times. It is kept in the Guildhall, under the special charge of the Chamberlain, and is used on such important occasions as Coronations. Length, 1 ft. 6 in.

suffer that any man offer you any wrong. God keep you."

The wording of the document seems to indicate that the government of London was at this time of a dual nature, the bishop and the port-reeve being at its head; but there is no evidence as to how their authority was divided or combined. The port-reeve, according to Norton, did not preside in the law courts, which were conducted by the aldermen of the wards; if so the bishop at this time held the position of Mayor.[1]

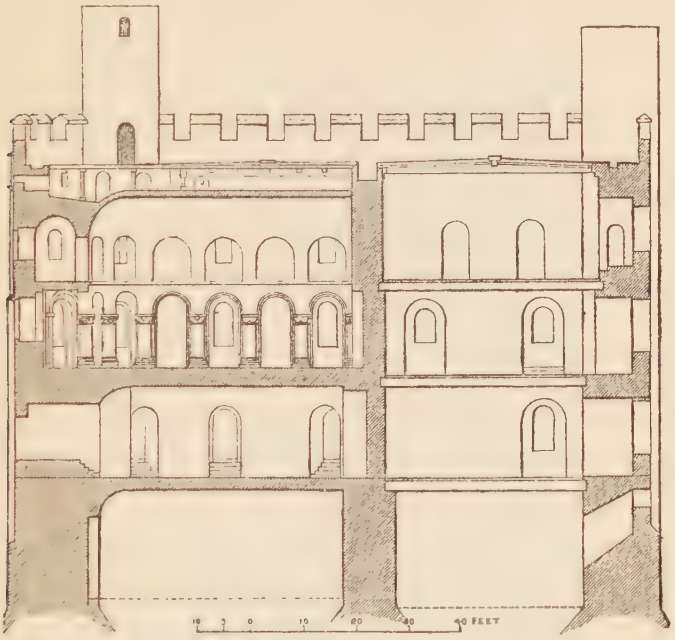
The Norman Conquest, whatever effect it may have had elsewhere in England, was undoubtedly beneficial to London. Many French and Norman merchants came over and took up their abode in it, realising that it was a far better trading centre than Rouen or Caen. They became at once an influential and important element in the population, they coalesced easily with their English fellow-citizens, and were not improbably responsible for the architectural development which was soon to take place in London.

Unless they were guilty of misrepresentation or forgery, the citizens of London were granted a second charter by the Conqueror, which gave them control of the city and the Sheriffdom of London. This charter does not now exist, but it was produced in evidence in the reign of Henry VI.[2]

The disturbance caused by the risings against William in the west and north seem to have passed London by, but in 1077 it experienced, not for the first time, nor yet the last, devastation by fire. The *Chronicle* says that the city was more terribly burned than it had ever been since it was built. This may be, quite possibly was, an exaggerated statement, but it certainly points to

[1] Norton, *Commentaries on the City of London*, pp. 258-59.
[2] Letter Book K, folio 120 b.

widespread destruction. The aged Bishop William who, in his episcopate, had witnessed so many stirring and momentous events had died two years before. It is not recorded that St Paul's Cathedral was destroyed, but it



A Sectional Drawing of the Great Norman Keep of the Tower of London.

The walls at the ground level average about 15 feet in thickness. On the second floor to the left is the Chapel of St John. The keep was begun by Gundulf, Bishop of Rochester, in 1078, the year after a great fire in London.

is unlikely that it should have escaped without injury. It is possible that the stockade of the mound and bailey castle was burned: in any case, the building of the "Tower" in stone began in the following year.

Bishop William was followed by Hugh of Orval, and in 1085 came Maurice, in whose second year London was again ravaged by fire. St Paul's was left a blackened

ruin beyond hope of repair, and with it perished many other churches and the best and richest quarters of the city. These repeated burnings were no doubt due to the prevalence of thatch, which was not forbidden until

THE NORMAN CRYPT OF ST MARY-LE-BOW CHURCH IN CHEAPSIDE.

The probable period of its building is between 1070 and 1090.

the reign of Richard I.[1] By 1087 these great conflagrations may have much altered the lay-out of the streets, and left standing still fewer buildings of the Roman era than had existed in the year of William's conquest.

However, the citizens of London went vigorously to the work of rebuilding their ravaged churches and

[1] 1189-99.

dwellings. The burning of St Paul's seems to have inspired them and their bishop with the idea of rearing in its place the hugest cathedral in England; one which should surpass the edifice which Bishop Walkelyn was erecting in the rival capital of Winchester as well as Eadward the Confessor's abbey church at Westminster. In this they certainly succeeded. New St Paul's, which, again and again restored and repaired, was to endure for some six hundred years, was a giant among episcopal churches. The new places of worship were in some instances built upon vaulted crypts: that of St Mary-le-Bow in Cheapside[1] survives to this day as a memorial of the rebuilding of London during this period.

The year 1087 was a disastrous one in other respects, for England was ravaged by an epidemic of what seems to have been enteric fever.[2] William I., hurt to death at Mantes, died peacefully at Rouen, strangely softened in his last moments from his former "starkness," releasing prisoners and making bequests for the relief of the poor. The 5000 pounds of silver which he willed for that purpose must have been a godsend to those in London and elsewhere who had been smitten by the prevailing disaster, and even the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* does not deny that William the Red (Rufus) faithfully fulfilled his father's last wishes. So much may be put to the credit of a monarch of whom little which is good has been recorded.

The Red King came to London from Winchester and spent the first Christmas of his reign there, ready to counter the intrigues of his uncles, Odo of Bayeux and Robert of Mortain. As nothing is specifically said to

[1] It is not possible to give a precise date to the crypt of St Mary-le-Bow, but such evidence as exists points to the period 1070-90. The crypt of the Church of St John, Clerkenwell, is approximately a century later, *i.e. circa* 1140, and its two eastern bays 1180.

[2] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 1087.

the contrary, it may be supposed that he did not thus early display the vices which presently were to make him hateful. He had every reason to conciliate the subjects from whom he hoped for support against his turbulent uncles and Norman barons: moreover, the great Archbishop Lanfranc, who had been his father's right hand, was still alive, and seems to have exercised a good influence upon his barbarian nature. When Lanfranc died in 1089, the Red King's defects began to display themselves. He had inherited in an aggravated form his father's vice of avarice, and in his gratification of it, he was aided by his notorious minister Ranulf "Flambard,"[1] Bishop of Durham.

The third year of William Rufus was marked disastrously for the city, for on November 16 it was smitten by a furious south-easterly gale, apparently something in the nature of a hurricane, which blew down 600 of the badly-built houses, and caused much damage at the Tower and to several churches, notably St Mary-le-Bow, which was completely unroofed.[2] Florence of Worcester describes how six of the rafters, after being whirled about in the air, were finally driven—in the order in which they had been fixed in the roof—so deeply into the earth that only the seventh or eighth part of them was visible! And when he adds that they were some 27 feet in length, one is not surprised at the mediaeval belief in miraculous happenings. In the same storm the Bridge (it was still of wood) was almost entirely swept away by the raging Thames, and the banks were overflowed to a considerable distance on both sides.[3]

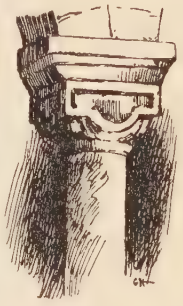
When London began to experience the grip of extortion is not known, but as time went on it became more

[1] He gained his nickname "Flambard," *i.e.* a firebrand, through his reputation for causing trouble.

[2] Florence of Worcester, sub anno 1091.

[3] John of Brompton, sub anno 1091.

and more severe. To the pressure of heavy taxation was soon to be added that of forced labour. William was building a great hall for his palace at Westminster ; also an outer defence (now the inner wall) around the Tower ; besides this the Bridge had been badly damaged[1] by the storms of 1089 and 1097, and needed extensive repairs. The requisitions for forced labour possibly affected the countryside rather than London itself, but the city must have felt severely the grinding pressure of the taxes—"gilds" as the *Chronicle* calls them. It may have been as a warning that, in 1096, after he had suppressed the revolt of Mowbray of Northumberland,[2] he sent a number of the prisoners to be executed in London. Between heavy financial burdens, forced labour and bloody executions it is not likely that the Londoners heard with any regret that the Red King had come to a sudden and violent end while hunting in the New Forest.



NORMAN CAPITAL IN THE TRIFORIUM OF THE CHOIR OF ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT, SMITHFIELD.

His brother Henry, obviously the most eligible candidate for the throne, was at once acclaimed king by the nobles then at Winchester, and without waste of time he hurried to London, for the adherence of the city on the Thames, although not the nominal capital, he clearly regarded as of supreme importance. Thus only three days after his brother's death he was crowned at Westminster Abbey by Bishop Maurice. His action produced some irritation on the part of the Archbishop of York who, as Archbishop Anselm of Canterbury was in exile, conceived himself to have the right of coronation. The new King promptly issued a charter promising, amongst other things, to refrain from excessive taxation, and as

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 1097. [2] *Ibid.*, 1096.

an earnest of his good intentions Ranulf Flambard was imprisoned in the Tower.

Henry's good intentions were not by any means completely fulfilled, especially in the matter of taxation: when he needed money he "swinked" his people as severely as William the Conqueror and William the Red. But he made really strenuous efforts to combat some of the abuses of which men complained. His police was effective, and the debasement of the coinage was effectually checked by his grim punishment of many fraudulent moneyers from all over England in 1124. Every one of them lost his right hand and was emasculated! On the whole, Henry I.'s character as king is very fairly summed up by the Anglo-Saxon chronicler,[1] "Good man he was, and all men stood in awe of him. No man durst misdo against another in his time. Peace he made for man and beast."

The peace and comparative prosperity of London during his long reign are indirectly witnessed by the few entries relating to the city. Henry seems to have been more partial to London than his predecessors, or perhaps its importance made it politic for him to reside in or near it regularly. It is probable that the latter explanation is the correct one, for Henry was decidedly "a man of business habits": in any case, when in England, he was almost always found at Westminster when the festivals of Christmas, Easter or Pentecost were celebrated.

Meanwhile London grew and prospered, and was beautified by the erection of many stately buildings, some fragments of which have survived to this day, having escaped the flames of 1666. New St Paul's was slowly rising, huge, plain and sombrely magnificent. One could wish that there were extant some representations of its appearance when finished, before the Gothic

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 1135.

reconstruction of the eastern portions. Stow says quaintly that Bishop Maurice's plans were so magnificent that men asked if the great church would ever be completed. It can be seen from the drawings of the nave by Hollar that the Late Norman architecture of the vast edifice was worthy of the greatness of the city, whose pride it was.

When Maurice died the work was continued with energy by his famous successor, Richard I. de Belmeis,[1] who made great efforts, by purchasing and clearing away the houses which encroached upon the precincts, to provide the cathedral with a close. William the Conqueror had, at the end of his reign, given to the bishop the stone of an ancient structure which may have been used as a royal residence until the Tower of London was built. This gift is mentioned by Stow, who cites an authority which he unfortunately does not name. The stone having presumably been used in the walls of the cathedral itself, and further material being now required for the wall of Bishop Richard's new close, Henry I. appears to have placed at his disposal the enclosure wall of the building. Dean Milman[2] interprets this in the sense that the King gave part of the area of "the Palatine Tower" to enlarge that of the close. In the absence, however, of any definite information as to the position of this "tower" one is compelled to leave the point unsettled.

At the same time as the great cathedral was rising on its hill, other spacious churches were coming on. Somewhere about 1123 Canon Rahere, the friend of Bishop Richard, began to build the church and monastery of St Bartholomew the Great, of which so much remains to-day, recalling to Londoners in the shadowy gloom of its solemn aisles the days of the great Norman kings.

[1] The modern form of the name is Beaumes.

[2] *Annals of St Paul's*, p. 24.

And while masons and sculptors plied their tasks the daily tide of the city's life flowed on with something like the regularity of the river beneath its walls. The arrival of sea-going ships in the Pool with cargoes from continental ports and their departure with English exports was the regular waterside life below the bridge. In 1114[1] there was a remarkable ebb of the tide in the Thames, so that it was possible to ford the river east of London Bridge. Henry's famous daughter Matilda was born in 1102, and doubtless there were rejoicings in the city. Sixteen years later there was mourning, for in that year the "Good Queen Maud," the last of the House of Alfred, died at Westminster on May 1. Ten years afterwards, *i.e.* in 1128, came the death of the Bishop of London, Richard I. de Belmeis, to whom the city owed so much for his energy in pressing on the work of cathedral-building. He was succeeded by Gilbert "Universalis."

Ecclesiastical matters were a good deal to the fore in these years. In 1125 an Italian Cardinal, John of Crema, deputed by Pope John XIX., was in London, and there was a three days' conference of prelates and abbots. Four years afterwards, at Michaelmas, there was another general council of English ecclesiastics in London, of which the avowed object was to put down the sexual laxity of the clergy. But the compiler of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*[2] remarks that nothing came of the orders issued. The clergy did as they pleased. He practically says that serious reform was never intended, and he is probably right, for one could hardly expect strict observance of their vows of celibacy among the rank and file, when the laxity among the bishops had reached such a pitch that Bishop Roger le Poore of Sarum lived quite openly with Maud of Ramsbury!

An ecclesiastical investiture which took place at

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 1114. [2] Sub anno 1129.

C. H.

THE SOUTH CHOIR AMBULATORY OF THE PRIORY CHURCH OF ST BARTHOLOMEW THE GREAT, SMITHFIELD

The building was commenced in about 1123 by Rahere, the first Prior, whose Perpendicular tomb appears between the arches on the left.

London in 1127 must be noted, for it fills a large space in the Peterborough edition of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. King Henry granted the abbacy of Peterborough to his namesake, Henry of Poitou. He had been a monk of Clugny, and already held the French abbey of St Jean d'Angely. The grant is generally believed to have been made because the ambitious churchman, in hope of reward, had given the King support in endeavouring to annul the marriage of his hostile nephew William "le Clito." His reward was the "Golden Abbey" of Peterborough, where he lived "like a drone in a hive" for some years, until his royal patron became aware of his unworthy character and ejected him in 1132.

At Whitsuntide in the same year the city was swept by a disastrous fire which damaged the cathedral, and if Florence of Worcester does not exaggerate, destroyed a very great part of London.

With this exception the long reign of Henry passed, to all appearance, in almost unbroken prosperity for London. With commercial eminence came also political advantage: for it was from Henry I. that it obtained the charter which placed Middlesex directly under its rule and granted it the right of electing its own sheriff. The taxes of the county were to be framed at a yearly rate of 300 pounds of silver or about £18,000 in modern gold value.

The charter is, without any doubt, of immense importance in the constitutional history of London, but its precise import is not so clear. Sir Laurence Gomme[1] considers that Middlesex was the *territorium* of London from Roman times; certainly the name is curious and seems to indicate that it was interposed between two communities of Saxons, and that it had no connection with either. He holds that throughout the Norman period London was defending her ancient right as a self-

[1] Gomme, *London*, p. 100 *sqq*.

governing community holding to its Roman traditions against the despotic centralising tendencies of the strong and domineering Norman kings. If so, it must be supposed that William I., when he granted his charter confirming the rights of the Londoners, did not fully understand the extent of these rights. He did not realise, perhaps did not wish to realise, that, as later writers had it,[1] London and Middlesex were one. He judged, or chose to judge, that the city's authority did not extend beyond its gates, and took Middlesex under his own royal (or national) jurisdiction. In that case London, after a lengthy period of unwilling acquiescence in a royal encroachment upon its territorial rights, now recovered them. The question is, however, too complicated to be discussed within the limits of this book. What is certain is that, under Henry I., London either re-gained or gained authority over Middlesex. The date is unknown : it is commonly held to have been 1101, but Mr Round[2] considers that it was perhaps thirty years later.

The youngest and ablest of the sons of the mighty Conqueror in 1135 passed away in peace, and, as so often in a primitive society when a strong ruler dies, his death was followed by anarchy. His only son, William, had been lost in the wreck of the *Blanche Nef*[3] fifteen years ago, and the old King, doubtless in dread and despondency, had called upon the barons to swear fealty to his daughter Maud, once the wife of the Holy Roman Emperor, Henry V. Left a widow in 1125 at the age of twenty-three, she had returned to England, and three years later was married by her father, for political purposes, to Geoffrey "the Handsome," the son of his enemy, Fulk V., Count of Anjou. The marriage was most unpopular among the Anglo-Norman and Norman

[1] *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, p. 247 *sqq.*
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 366.
[3] = "The White Ship."

barons, for Normandy and Anjou were foes of long standing, and the thought of being ruled by an Angevin of the line of Black Fulk was hateful to them, although Maud was certainly of English descent on the mother's side. There was, however, another candidate to whom their thoughts turned. This was Stephen, Count of Mortain and Boulogne, the second son of Adèle, the Conqueror's daughter, by Stephen, Count of Blois. Stephen's wife was Maud of Boulogne, whose mother was the sister of Good Queen Maud, and had therefore English blood in her veins. He had some attractive qualities and seems to have been distinctly an amiable man: for he was clement and placable to a degree most unusual in those iron days—too much so indeed. His wife was a fine character, with more than a touch in her of Alfred and Aethelflaed, as she was presently to show. Also his brother, Henry, was Bishop of the royal city of Winchester and Papal Legate in England. Lastly, Stephen himself was well known and popular, while Geoffrey "Plantagenet" of Anjou was neither. England's conception of him was precisely that which Rudyard Kipling puts into the mouth of Gilbert de Aquila concerning his enemy Fulk—"a black Angevin thief."[1] The rights of heredity were very lightly regarded by the Norman, so Stephen of Boulogne, being near at hand, while the Empress Maud and her husband were far away, made his bid for the crown of England, and won it.

His success was due to London. Landing at Dover amid sullen silence, he rode swiftly through lowering Kent to the great city, and was greeted with enthusiasm. The Londoners did not want a black Angevin thief. "We will not have a foreigner to rule over us," they shouted. Their logic was somewhat faulty: one must suppose that they regarded the nephew of their late King as different from such an absolute "outsider" as

[1] *Puck of Pook's Hill*, "Old Men at Pevensey."

Geoffrey Plantagenet, even though the latter might be the husband of that King's daughter. William de Corbeuil, the Archbishop of Canterbury, wavered and gave way, despite the fealty which he had sworn to his King's daughter; so did Roger le Poore, the great justiciar; Stephen's brother, Henry of Winchester, naturally stood by him. But very few of the great barons were present: the majority of the assembly which came together to consider Stephen's claims consisted of the merchants of London.

Stephen, losing no time, hurried on to the royal city of Winchester with a handful of followers, seized the richly-furnished treasure hoard of Henry I., and with it returned to London, to be elected king by the officials, bishops, barons and merchant-princes there collected—practically, as has been generally recognised, by London itself.

The men of London, or one might say, London's mercantile aristocracy, had committed perhaps the greatest blunder in the city's history. Yet it is not so easy to say in the face of the facts which confronted them, that they were wrong. Stephen was certainly a more amiable man than the hard and grasping Geoffrey of Anjou. Stephen's wife was quite as much English as Geoffrey's wife. London made its choice, and had great cause to regret it for nineteen years.

It might perhaps appear to superstitious minds that Heaven had given its verdict against London, for, in 1136, the year after Stephen's coronation, there was a disastrous fire which destroyed part of the city and damaged the now almost completed cathedral.[1] Yet actually it is not clear that London suffered very much by the disorder of Stephen's reign. All over the countryside, as they realised that Stephen could not rule with

[1] Matthew of Westminster says that it began at London Bridge and extended as far as St Clement Danes.

the strong hand of his predecessors, the barons fortified their dwellings and turned the land into a chaos with private war and oppression. The horrors of the times are painted in terrible colours by the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*—but London, to all appearances, held its own, and presumably maintained itself by its commerce.

The Londoners must, sooner or later, have realised that Stephen, however amiable and brave, was a failure as a king, for in 1141, when he had been defeated and captured at Lincoln, they made no opposition to the advance of the Empress Maud. She was duly crowned at Winchester by Stephen's brother Henry, who had become alienated from him, and in June she entered the city, which for six years had kept her from her rights. Unfortunately at this high tide of her fortunes she showed the worst side of her otherwise not ignoble character. She irritated the stubborn pride of the Londoners by her high-handedness and open resentment—resentment not unjustified, but which she would have done better to conceal or forget. She installed as sheriff Geoffrey de Mandeville, Earl of Essex, a shifty Norman baron of the worst type, and demanded a huge contribution from the city, while her brave namesake and cousin, the wife of Stephen, was raising an army in Kent, determined to rescue her husband.

The Empress sent in desperate haste to her faithful half-brother, Robert of Gloucester, and David, King of Scotland, urging them to come to her relief, but it was too late. The citizens rose in fierce revolt ; the Empress fled to Winchester, and Queen Maud, outmarching King David and Earl Robert, came triumphantly into London. The timbers of the old bridge were becoming familiarised with the tramp of the supporters of the different sides in the struggle.

Stephen was presently, by a series of chances which do not concern London, released from captivity and lived

to reign, though hardly to rule, for twelve anarchic years until his death in 1154.

Again the history of London becomes something like a blank. It may be that it was not altogether unprosperous. While throughout most of England private war was rife, and life and property so insecure that if two or three men came riding to a town men fled believing them robbers,[1] London, secure within its walls, was strong enough to maintain some measure of order and able to carry on its trade with the Baltic, the Low Countries and elsewhere.

Stephen had every reason to exert what small authority he was able to exercise in favour of the city which had so stoutly supported him, and there is little reason to suppose that traders fled from it, as they certainly did from other places, to Scotland, where they could pursue their vocations under the protection of the strong and enlightened David I. According to William of Malmesbury, London was "filled with goods brought by the merchants of all countries, but especially with those of Germany, and when there is a scarcity of corn in other parts of England it [*i.e.* London] is a granary where the article may be bought more cheaply than anywhere else."[2] William is speaking of the reign of Henry I., but though the anarchic conditions of 1135-54 must have reacted upon the prosperity of London, the historian's words tell a story plain enough to the student of economics. The city suffered, but not fatally, perhaps not even very severely. Its political pre-eminence was more firmly established than ever, for its rival, Winchester, had been nearly destroyed by fire in 1141.

The foreign element, which always tended, then as now, to become naturalised rapidly and completely, was numerous and important. During the Norman period

[1] *A.-S. Chron.*, sub anno 1137.

[2] William of Malmesbury, *De Gestis Pont.*, Ang. Lib. III.

the continental immigrants seem to have been in the main Frenchmen and Flemings, but there were also a considerable number of Jews, who thus began those transactions in the national finance which lasted for over two centuries until their expulsion in 1290. The shrewd administrator, Henry I., saw their value as financiers and extended to them his formal protection. But if influential, they were certainly not liked, whereas the Frenchmen quickly identified themselves with the people into whose midst they had come. One of these settlers was Gilbert Becket, the father of Thomas Becket. Gilbert was a Norman of Rouen, who was for a time port-reeve. Thomas is counted an English saint, but his French nature showed itself at every turn of his remarkable career.

The evil days were coming to a close. Stephen doubtless did his feeble best, but there are signs that even London was becoming tired of him. By 1153 his course was nearly run. His brave wife was dead and his eldest son, Eustace, who seems to have been unworthy of his parents, died in the same year. The young Henry, Count of Anjou, the son of Matilda and Geoffrey, was already in England to press his claims, and the weary King agreed to recognise him as his heir. The two came to London together and worked out a plan to put an end to the feudal anarchy which was devastating the land. The King, says the *Chronicle*, was stronger than he had ever been before, but before the work of re-organisation had well begun he died in October 1154. Except for his perjury as regards the Empress Maud, he was rather an estimable man, but as a king he had been a hopeless failure, and when Henry II. entered London in state to create a new England, it may well be believed that he was received " with great worship."

CHAPTER IV

LONDON UNDER THE EARLY ANGEVINS
1154 TO 1272

With the accession of Henry II., the first of the great Plantagenet line to rule over England, better days dawned for London. After nineteen years of civil strife and feudal anarchy, the country had once again a strong and able ruler whose determination was to keep order in the land. One of his first measures was to order the departure—"deportation" as it would now be called—of the unruly horde of foreign mercenaries whom Stephen had been forced to employ, and proved unable to control.

Henry was in Normandy when the news of Stephen's death reached him. He landed in England on December the 8th, 1154, and entered London ten days later.[1] On the following day he was crowned in Westminster Abbey with elaborate ceremony, and bound himself by solemn oath to rule as his grandfather had done. After the ceremony he summoned a great council at Bermondsey Abbey. Here he issued the decree banishing the foreign soldiers, and such was their sense of his power and the popular hatred felt towards them, that they fled forthwith. One may imagine the curses with which the Londoners hastened the departure of those who had garrisoned the Tower and roystered in the streets of the city. Only once in the next fifty years, and that at a crisis which made desperate measures necessary, were foreign mercenaries brought to England. Of all the evils which troubled London in the Middle Ages, the most hated seems to have been the plague of foreigners.

Henry's strong hand was felt in London, but the great King saw little enough of his capital city. His life was passed in incessant activity, moving from one point to

[1] *A.-S. Chron.* and Roger of Wendover, sub anno 1154.

THE MAGNIFICENT NORMAN NAVE OF OLD ST PAUL'S.

A remarkable feature of this great achievement of the Cathedral builders of the Norman period is the continuity of the vertical lines which, unlike the majority of great churches built at this time, carry the eye from floor to vaulted roof without a break. This nave had become by the time of Bishop Braybroke (1380-1404) a scene of daily scandal as a resort of idlers and those in pursuit of business.

(*From an engraving by Hollar.*)

another of his wide dominions. He visited London in all some twenty-eight times in thirty-five years, but never for any lengthened period. On February the 29th, 1155,[1] his famous wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, bore to him his second son, named Henry after his father, at London; according to Matthew of Westminster—most probably in the palace of Westminster.

Although Henry's quarrel with his former friend, Thomas Becket, is by no means the most important event of his reign, it enters very much into the story of London; because Becket himself was a Londoner born, although, so far as is known, of English blood there was not a drop in his veins.

Thomas of London, as he was generally called by his contemporaries, was, as already mentioned, the son of Gilbert Becket, a Norman gentleman who settled in London, and won such golden opinions that in time he reached the highest civil office, that of port-reeve, and his memory was held in high honour in after ages, when it was the custom of the Mayor, upon entering office, to visit in state the tombs of both father and son.[2] There is a romantic story that in his youth he went on crusade, was taken prisoner and assisted to escape by a Syrian girl, the daughter of his captor, who had fallen in love with him. He promised to requite her affection by marriage, but as he did not return, the girl made her way to England. She knew two words only, "London" and "Gilbert." With the help of the one she reached London: by calling the second she found her way to Becket's house, and became his wife, having been already converted to the faith of her lover.[3] That is the story: and it may possibly have some foundation in fact,

[1] Matthew of Westminster, sub anno 1155.

[2] *Liber Albus*, pp. 26-27.

[3] Holinshed states that she was a Saracen by religion before her marriage.

although Fitz-Stephen says that Thomas's mother was a native of Caen, a very pious woman named Rohais or Rohese, whose practice it was to weigh her son at every anniversary of his birthday and give the equivalent in food and clothing to the poor. There may have been some romantic episode in the early career of Gilbert Becket which Fitz-Stephen chose to hide—it might have been displeasing to the popular taste to learn that the saint had Oriental blood in his veins. Whether this were true or not, Thomas Becket's characteristics were certainly not English, except, perhaps, in the supposedly national defect of dogged obstinacy.[1] His fiery temper, sudden and cataclysmic change of views, fierce enthusiasm in defence of his newly acquired convictions, and, above all, his addiction to flamboyancy and theatrical display, are all Gallic. Yet London claimed him as her own, and was intensely proud of him. When, for some reason or reasons unknown—possibly an earth-tremor—the new walls of the Tower enceinte, erected by Henry III. with funds extorted from the Londoners, collapsed, their fall was attributed to the power of London's only saint.

Of Thomas Becket as a boy and a young man London must have seen very much. Until the age of ten he was brought up by his parents, but in 1128 they sent him to Merton Priory (now within the area of Greater London) to be educated for a public career. After some years there he returned to London for what would now be called a university course, and eventually he was sent to Paris to study theology. When he rejoined his parents in 1140 he found them somewhat depressed in fortune by various losses, and relieved them of expense by becoming secretary to a wealthy relative named Osbert Huit-Deniers, one of the leading men in the city. Two

[1] This sketch of Thomas's life is for the most part taken from Fitz-Stephen's biography, supplemented from William of Newburgh and other contemporary chroniclers.

years later he was introduced to Theobald, the famous Archbishop of Canterbury, whose household was a veritable college of scholars and administrators. After this his career belongs to the history of England, and is not much connected with London. He, no doubt, came hither in attendance on the Archbishop and King Henry II., and may often have paid private visits ; but the most dramatic incidents of his strange career were enacted away from the city in which he had spent his youth.

Becket was never in any real sense of the word a priest. His tastes, as far as can be seen, were for business. He took orders because all civil servants were ecclesiastics, and to the end did not display much of the spirit of a Christian. There were contemporary writers, such as William of Newburgh, who expressed their opinion that he lacked wisdom : that he possessed little self-control is fairly clear. But he was undoubtedly the most picturesque figure produced by London for many centuries. Of his long and successful official career, his odd conversion to religiosity, his still stranger *volte face* from secularity to extreme ecclesiasticism, his quarrel with Henry II., and his violent death there is no need to speak : London saw little of him in those stormy years of his strenuous life.

The busy city, however, heard of him from time to time ; it witnessed also the anger of his exasperated master when all Becket's relatives were banished relentlessly from London and England. In reply, the self-exiled Archbishop thundered his anathemas against all who supported the King.

Though London saw little of Becket, the city was involved in the great quarrel, for the Bishop, the famous Gilbert Foliot, was a steady opponent of Thomas. John of Salisbury, Becket's devoted admirer, says that Foliot's lifelong aim was to substitute London for Canterbury as

the ecclesiastical capital of England. This is doubtful, and John of Salisbury was a reckless writer, but it is certain that Bishop Foliot disliked Becket,—not without reason, for Thomas of London, hitherto distinguished chiefly as a warlike and extravagant lay official, was a strange candidate for the archiepiscopal throne. Foliot perhaps expected that the primacy would fall to him by right, and when he heard the news that it had been given to Becket he burst out in bitter and pointed sarcasm: "The King has wrought a miracle—turned a layman and a soldier into an archbishop." It was quite true; and by a strange chance the King was the victim of his own ingenious device. His friend Thomas Becket became his worst enemy, while the disappointed Bishop of London proved a loyal supporter.

When Becket exiled himself, it was to Bishop Foliot that Henry II. entrusted the administration of his deserted see. Yet it does not appear that he showed himself a partisan: on the contrary, he was joined with two other bishops by the Pope to intercede for Becket with the angry King.

The King's quarrel with Becket does not seem to have affected London very much. The city has always had a curious habit of pursuing the even tenor of its way regardless of outside turmoil. Its sympathies appear on the whole to have been on the side of the archbishop: probably the King's cruel and hasty action in exiling Becket's relatives and connections alienated public feeling, at least temporarily, from the Crown. In 1170, the sixth and fatal year of the quarrel, however, an event occurred at Westminster which marked the beginning of the end. The King had his eldest son Henry, now fifteen years of age, solemnly crowned on June the 14th.[1] Becket being in exile, the ceremony was solemnised by his rival, Roger de Pont l'Evêque, Archbishop of York. Henry com-

[1] Matthew of Westminster, sub anno 1170.

mitted an error in not sending for his son's little wife, Marguerite of France, daughter of King Louis VII. This produced a storm which the King was too wise to ignore. He went overseas to France, and at Frèteval was reconciled to Becket. But it was at best a hollow reconciliation : old grievances rankled : the greatest tact and forbearance were necessary on both sides.

Unfortunately tact and forbearance were not among Thomas Becket's qualities. He returned to England, apparently in triumph, but warnings were sent to him that his life was not safe. Actually it is most unlikely that Henry would have been so foolish as to molest him. Becket entered London amid manifestations of public pleasure and rejoicing ; the population regarded him with admiration as one who had withstood a tyrant for the glory of God. But he felt himself uncomfortable in the city, near Foliot and his many enemies, and soon returned to Canterbury, where he sealed his fate by excommunicating Archbishop Roger and others. The miserable result is known. Becket was murdered at Canterbury on December the 29th by a band of private enemies. Even in his last moments he could not control his temper, dying bravely indeed, but hardly as a saint should make his end. So passed the most brilliant, but not the best or greatest, man whom London produced throughout the Middle Ages.

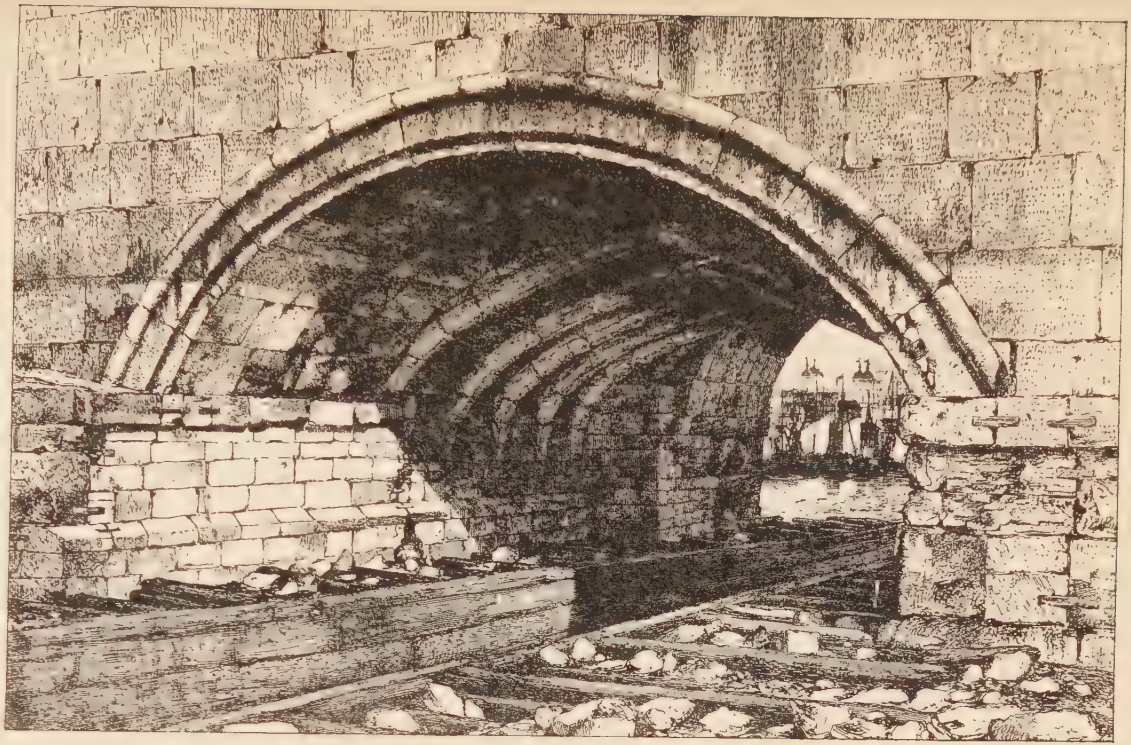
Thereafter for many years London's busy existence continued peacefully under the strong rule of Henry II. By far the most important civic event during these years was the commencement of the replacing of the bridge by a new structure in stone. The timber bridge, repeatedly repaired and reconstructed, often no doubt unskilfully and unsubstantially, was a constant source of trouble and expense. Its superintendent during Henry's reign was an ecclesiastical architect, Peter, Rector of St Mary Colechurch. In 1163 it was in such a weak condition that

Master Peter reconstructed it completely of elm timber,[1] but it was not until thirteen years later that the civic body wrought itself up to the point of determining to build a new bridge entirely of stone. The beginnings were made in 1176. Slowly year by year appeared that famous structure which spanned the Thames for more than seven centuries, and in time constituted the most picturesque, if not the most venerable, of the architectural features of London. Between lack of means, political troubles and, beyond doubt, want of engineering skill, the work dragged on for thirty-three years.

In a later chapter the famous old bridge will be fully described: here it is only necessary to say that it consisted of twenty very unequal pointed arches, with a chapel dedicated, as might be expected, to St Thomas of Canterbury, on the central and largest pier. Peter, "the Chaplain of Colechurch," died in 1205, having lived to see the work nearly completed.[2] During the lengthy period of building the wooden bridge continued to do duty.

In 1184, eight years after the work of forming the bases of the piers for the new bridge had been commenced, London welcomed some distinguished foreign visitors in the persons of Philip, Archbishop of Cologne, and Philip, Count of Flanders. Ostensibly they were on pilgrimage to Canterbury: actually they came on diplomatic business from Frederick Barbarossa, the great German Emperor. They visited London in company with the King, and remained for several days, the streets being cleaned for their entry and the houses decorated.[3] These visits of distinguished foreigners and others conferred a real benefit in inspiring periodical cleansings of the city, which otherwise was normally as filthy as most

[1] Stow: perhaps copying the Register of Trinity Priory.
[2] *Annals of Waverley Abbey*, sub anno 1176.
[3] Matthew of Westminster, sub anno 1184.



ONE OF THE ARCHES (THE ELEVENTH FROM THE NORTH END) OF OLD LONDON BRIDGE.

It was known as Long Entry Lock, and its extreme narrowness, caused by the sterlings protecting the piers, shows how the mediaeval structure formed a weir, through which the penned-up water rushed with very great force at each fall of the tide. The pointed arches in the centre show the width of the original stone bridge: the semi-circular arches on either side were additions made at a very much later period.

From a drawing by Edward W. Cooke.

of the mediaeval towns of Western Europe. One can take it that very few streets were paved, and that those which were unpaved were commonly deep in rubbish and garbage. That London's smells were notorious is well known, and when it is realised that there were pig-sties in front of many houses and that the streams were often foul with sewage, no more requires to be said. It is only too plain that while there was much colour as well as marvels of architectural achievement in mediaeval London there was also indescribable filth and stench.

The fires which have been recorded had now left little above ground of the Roman buildings; probably all the refinements of Roman civilisation, including baths, conduits and sewers, were by this time buried deeply and out of use. Yet to contemporary writers and visitors London seemed a very splendid city. Fitz-Stephen, the biographer of Becket, waxes enthusiastic upon its beauties of situation, with the silvery Thames washing its southern walls, no less than upon its architectural glories, its cathedral, its Palace Tower, its two castles, and, above all, its 126 parish churches. The number seems incredible, but it must be understood that mediaeval city parishes were very small—often only a few acres in extent—and many of their churches nothing more than very small chapels.

The population of London at this time was estimated by Peter of Blois, Archdeacon of Canterbury, at about forty thousand. On this calculation there was a place of public worship to every three hundred inhabitants, while, in addition, there were the cathedral and thirteen monastic churches. The average area of a parish must have been about three acres! There is to-day at Exeter a parish of equally limited extent.

Though under Henry II.'s strong rule London prospered exceedingly, the King himself does not seem to have had any special feeling of friendship towards the

great city, for he could hardly forget that it had been strongly opposed to his mother. His charter, while confirming the city's rights, seems to indicate that he kept its governance in his own hands. He appointed the sheriffs himself, and the "farm" of the Middlesex taxation was apparently withheld.[1]

Henry died in 1189, a broken-hearted man, at war with his children. To him succeeded Richard I., that strangest combination of knight, poet and unscrupulous diplomatist—just such a man as might have been expected, since his father was the statesman Henry II. of Anjou and his mother the fiery and brilliant Eleanor of Aquitaine. His reign was spent almost entirely in Palestine and on the Continent: London saw little of him, except on two occasions. At the commencement of his reign he came to England, and was crowned at Westminster with great splendour on September 3, 1189.[2] Baldwin of Canterbury officiated, and he was supported by the Archbishops of Rouen, Dublin and Trèves, the presence of the latter being significant of the ties, diplomatic and commercial, which were forming with the German or "Holy Roman" Empire as it was then called. That same night there was in London a savage uprising against the Jews, which spread to other parts of the kingdom and was attended by terrible scenes of bloodshed and self-immolation on the part of the unhappy and detested race.

The remainder of Richard's short stay was occupied with raising money by any and every means for the Third Crusade, after which he departed with his soldiers and his unscrupulously-filled money chests, and London saw no more of the "lion-hearted" sovereign for a space of four years.

Richard left as regent in England the Chancellor

[1] R. R. Sharpe, *London and the Kingdom*, p. 58.

[2] Matthew of Westminster, Roger of Wendover, sub anno 1189.

William of Longchamp, Bishop of Ely, a man of high and overbearing character, who before long managed to quarrel with everybody, including the King's brother and present heir John; the great Hugh de Pudsey, Bishop of Durham, whom he pushed out of his association in the regency; many of the barons; and also the citizens of London, whom he exasperated by strengthening the Tower. He was not altogether to blame: he was loyal to his master, and much of his unpopularity was probably due to the fact that that master was incessantly pressing him for remittances of money. But whatever his excuse he was both harsh and tactless.

Matters came to a head in October 1191, when Richard was far away on his crusade in the Holy Land. Prince John rallied to himself all the disaffected elements, and his party was so strong that Longchamp was afraid to go to the general council which his rivals summoned at Reading. He returned to London, and on October the 7th called a meeting of the citizens in the Guildhall.[1] He denounced John as aiming at the deposition of his brother (which was probably true), and called upon the Londoners to stand by him for the King. But while some, led by Henry de Cornhill, were ready to do so, the party which favoured John, under Richard Fitz-Reiner, was much the stronger. Longchamp took refuge in the Tower, and on the next day John arrived. A meeting of barons and Londoners was held in St Paul's Cathedral: Longchamp was deposed and John recognised as regent. Walter de Coutances, Archbishop of Rouen, who held a commission from Richard to appoint a new regency, but who had hitherto temporised, now produced his authority and was named Justiciar.[2]

[1] This is one of the earliest references to the mediaeval basilica of London.

[2] Richard of Devizes, 1190; Benedict of Peterborough; Ralph de Diceto; Giraldus Cambrensis; Roger of Hoveden.

What followed is memorable in the constitutional history of London. It seems that Richard Fitz-Reiner and his adherents only recognised John on the condition that he should acknowledge London as an independent commune (*communia*). Exactly what this meant is much in doubt, but there can be little question that it marked a great advance in the independence of London. But it was nothing new: the *communio*, *communia* or *communa* had been long in existence: the very word appears fifty years before.[1] John was confirming something which already existed, but had long been in abeyance owing to the heavy pressure of the strong Norman and Angevin despots. But the action was of the highest importance. Richard of Devizes[2] says that the *communia* would not have been conceded by Henry II. or Richard I. for a million marks. It was a portent—everything which was bad; "a puffing up (*tumor*) of the people; a threat to the kingdom; an emasculation of the priesthood." Evidently the worthy Richard was no believer in municipal rights.

That the event was a municipal revolution is not doubted by Bishop Stubbs.[3] Henceforth London was administered by a mayor instead of a sheriff or portreeve. He was assisted by twelve aldermen, who are at first called *skivini*, apparently a corruption of the French *échevins*. Mr Round[4] thinks it beyond question that the civic constitution of Rouen was the model of that of London. But it is at least probable that the reorganisation which gave London its mayor was no more than a reshaping to suit new requirements. A slightly foreign tinge may have been given to the constitution by the fact that the justiciar was a Norman-French archbishop.

[1] William of Malmesbury, *Hist. Nov.*, II. 576.
[2] Rolls Series, III. 416.
[3] *Const. Hist.*, I. 406.
[4] J. H. Round, *Commune of London and other Studies*, pp. 219-260.

The first mayor,[1] properly so called, of London was, according to all the evidence, Henry Fitz-Ailwyne or Eylwin of Londenstane.[2] The authority is Arnald Fitz-Thedmar's *Liber de Antiquis Legibus*, written in the thirteenth century. He says that his appointment took place in the first year of Richard I. (*i.e.* 1188-89) and that he held office for twenty-five years, until his death. Fitz-Thedmar was himself an alderman, and it is therefore likely that he would have had perfect knowledge. Thus, whatever happened in 1191, it is probable that the chief magistrate of London was styled "mayor" two years before. When it was known in 1193 that King Richard had been kidnapped and was a prisoner in Germany, the Mayor of London (*Maior Lundoniarum*) is named as one of the treasurers of the huge ransom of 150,000 marks demanded for his release.[3]

London welcomed its brave absentee monarch with great enthusiasm and magnificence. The German nobles who accompanied him to receive the ransom were dumbfounded.[4] They had fancied—like the Indian Nawab of a later age, who believed that in all England there were but ten thousand soldiers—that the country was ruined by the payment of so large a sum, and one honest Graf or Markgraf told the King frankly that if the Emperor Henry had realised how wealthy England was, the ransom would have been far larger!

Richard spent his second brief stay in England chiefly in collecting more money by means as unscrupulous as before. In fact money, and more money, was the keynote of his policy towards England for the rest of his

[1] A complete list of the mayors appears in the Chronological Summary in the Appendix.

[2] His house would appear to have adjoined London Stone, now in Cannon Street, opposite the station.

[3] Roger of Hoveden, III. 212, Rolls Series.

[4] William of Newburgh, I. p. 406, Rolls Series.

reign. He said once, when in a reckless mood,[1] that he would sell London if he could find a buyer ; and the city, taking advantage of this mood, secured a new charter in return for hard cash.

The taxes seem to have been collected with harshness, and the result was a remarkable rebellion in 1196, called after the name of its leader, William Fitz-Osbert "of the Long Beard." It is not clear how far his motives were disinterested: the accounts of chroniclers vary according to their prejudices. William of Newburgh says that his motives were base. Matthew Paris, with popular sympathies, calls him the "defender of the poor against the royal extortioners." It seems fair to believe that he was the spokesman of the artisans and small traders as against the small group of wealthy merchant princes. His adherents were undoubtedly numerous. But the Royal Justiciar, Hubert Walter, Archbishop of Canterbury, saw in the tumult nothing but a revolt against the King, and the outbreak was quickly suppressed. William took refuge in the Church of St Mary-le-Bow, but the Primate of England showed no respect for the sacred rights of sanctuary. The church was violated by his men-at-arms, and "William of the Long Beard" was dragged forth, summarily tried and hanged.[2]

It was possibly on account of the warning given by this outbreak[3] that in the following year Richard, no doubt by the advice of Archbishop Hubert, issued a writ forbidding the wardens of the Tower to exact more than the usual toll from incoming ships, and also directed the removal of weirs in the Thames. These weirs were presumably erected for purposes of catching fish, but they naturally obstructed navigation

[1] Richard of Devizes, III. 388, Rolls Series.

[2] William of Newburgh; Matthew Paris; Roger de Hoveden, sub anno 1196.

[3] Sharpe, *London and the Kingdom*, p. 71.

and would become to shipowners an intolerable nuisance.

Two years later Richard met his death before the castle of Châlus in the Limousin, and his brother John, by common consent the worst of English kings, succeeded him without disturbance or difficulty.[1] He was crowned at Westminster by Hubert Walter on May 26, 1199.

At first John was well disposed to London, for it must have been with his assent that, in 1200, the Court of Aldermen of twenty-five members was formally established,[2] and there does not seem, during the earlier years of his reign, to have been any special disaffection in the city. Even when the year 1208 brought the Interdict placed upon the kingdom by Pope Innocent III., the people as a whole were inclined to stand by their monarch rather than the Pope, and had John's character been less vile his fortunes might have been different.

In 1207 there was much pageantry in London, when John's nephew, Otho of Brunswick, the Holy Roman Emperor, visited his uncle to obtain aid against his competitors in Germany.[3] The city was decorated, and the Kaiser was welcomed by a train of burgesses brilliantly arrayed—the first of many civic pomps.

But soon afterward signs appear that London was growing tired of its unworthy King. In 1209 "Matthew of Westminster" speaks casually of John's hatred of London. It may have been hatred of Robert Fitz-Walter, Baron of Dunmow and owner of Baynard's Castle, who held much property near London and exercised great influence as Hereditary Commander or Banneret of the civic militia. For various reasons the bitterness of Fitz-Walter's enmity towards the King resulted in 1213 in a royal move to demolish his London

[1] Matthew of Westminster, sub anno 1199.
[2] Fitz-Thedmar, p. 2.
[3] Matthew of Westminster, sub anno 1207.

residence, Castle Baynard. Along with tyrannical ebullitions of this kind went constant exactions of money to finance John's attempts to regain his French possessions from King Philip Augustus, and in the end London became, as it was many centuries later, whole-heartedly anti-royalist.

The temperature of the feeling of resentment may have been raised by a disaster which befell the city in 1212.[1] On July 10 a great fire broke out in Southwark. It swept across the new stone bridge (it was only completed in 1209), on which fragile and inflammable houses already stood, gained a firm hold on the densely packed streets at the northern end, and before long spread to almost every quarter of the city. At least three thousand persons perished in the flames, and London, ruinous and impoverished, was less than ever able or willing to find men and money for John's continental projects. In the same year Mayor Fitz-Ailwyne reached the end of his life.

It was in the following year that John made his submission to the Pope's Legate at Dover, and in 1214 the details of the ignominious settlement were concluded. Then followed the solemn removal of the Interdict announced in St Paul's by the Legate Nicholas of Tusculum and Stephen Langton, the new Archbishop of Canterbury, whom Innocent had forced upon England, but who was soon to prove himself the champion of the subjects against royal tyranny.

Already Stephen Langton had taken his stand. On August 25, 1213, an assembly of barons and clergy, presided over by the Archbishop, was held in St Paul's. Langton produced a copy of the charter of Henry I., by which that monarch had undertaken to end the tyranny

[1] Matthew of Westminster, sub anno 1212. Stow also cites the *Chron. of Dunmow*, William de Packington and William (*i.e.* Walter) of Coventry. The event is also noted in the *Annals of Waverley Abbey*.

of William Rufus and he pointed out that if the barons really wished to reform the government of the country, here was a legal precedent. He then read the document, and the whole assembly declared with one voice that to establish such liberties they would fight and, if need be, die.[1]

The crisis was near at hand. John had, by patient endeavour, formed a great league of Continental princes, with the Emperor Otho at its head, and having made his peace with Innocent and Archbishop Stephen, he crossed to France to do his part. The result was utter defeat at every point, and when he returned he found the whole baronage ready to take arms against him.

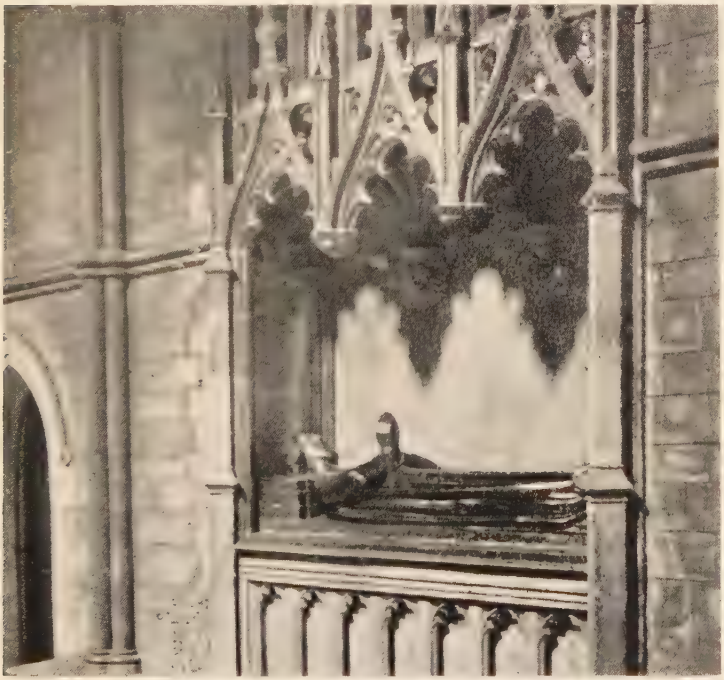
While John was engaged in futile warfare in Poitou the English barons, who had refused to accompany him, held a meeting at Bury St Edmunds and determined that, if the King would not restore their rights and liberties as under Henry I., they would make war upon him. John, returning to England, made various cunning but useless efforts to break up the coalition: one of his devices was to assume the cross as a soldier of the Church (*i.e.* of Pope Innocent), so that war against him would be sacrilege! But all these attempts failed.

London prepared for war, encircling its somewhat dilapidated city wall with a new and deep moat. The nobles of the south assembled under Robert Fitz-Walter, who, as Banneret of London, was created "Marshal of the Army of God and Holy Church": the northern barons concentrated at Stamford and rode hastily by way of Brackley to join their confederates in London. Before this accumulation of force the King was for the moment helpless, and, pending the intervention of the Pope and the arrival of mercenaries from overseas, he consented to accept the list of sixty-three articles famous in history as Magna Carta. Good Londoners should

[1] Matthew Paris, R. Wendover, sub anno 1213.

OAKEN EFFIGY OF A CROSS-LEGGED KNIGHT IN CHAIN-MAIL AND SURCOAT IN THE NORTH CHOIR AISLE OF SOUTHWARK CATHEDRAL.

The figure may represent a member of the great Anglo-Norman family of De Warenne. Early 13th century.



G.H.

THE TOMB AND EFFIGY OF JOHN GOWER, THE POET, IN THE NORTH AISLE OF THE NAVE OF ST SAVIOUR'S CATHEDRAL, SOUTHWARK.

His head is shown resting on three volumes inscribed with the names of his most famous works. The chief is the *Confessio Amantis*, which was written in English. He died in 1408 at the age of nearly eighty.

know that Article 13 gave to the citizens all its ancient rights and liberties.

As is known, John ratified Magna Carta only to repudiate it, which caused the angry barons to show considerable insolence and lack of wisdom. London was practically besieged,[1] while the Pope placed it under an interdict once more. But the sturdy Londoners set the occupant of the chair of St Peter at defiance. The barons, however, were helpless, and it was they, rather than the Londoners, who decided to obtain assistance from a foreign prince in the person of the Dauphin Louis, son of Philip Augustus, afterwards Louis VIII. of France.

On a June day in 1216, four years after the disastrous fire, Louis entered London and it became his headquarters for a year.[2] But the unfortunate city seems to have suffered much from the violence and indiscipline of his followers as well as those of the barons, and, after the death of John in the same year, public opinion veered round to the little King Henry III. The Marshal and Banneret Fitz-Walter, however, stood by the foreign prince, and was taken prisoner at Lincoln. When the fleet which was bringing reinforcements from France was defeated off Dover by Hubert de Burgh, Louis was helpless and came to terms. The English were very ready to be rid of him. London made him a loan of 1500 marks to enable him to defray his expenses and he departed with his followers. To the end of his days he detested the unstable English traitors, as he considered them. Yet he evidently left a good name behind him, at least with some of the citizens, for during a number of years there was a French party in London.

The long reign of Henry III. was a period of uncertainty for the city. Henry was not a bad type like his

[1] Matthew of Westminster, sub anno 1215.

[2] *Ibid.*, sub anno 1216.

father: in some respects he was a really estimable man, but he was weak, constitutionally incapable of keeping his word and intensely extravagant. During his earlier years the kingdom was administered by his father's great supporters William le Marshall and Hubert de Burgh, and it is usual to speak of their rule as mild and popular. But there is no doubt that Hubert was a harsh minister of finance, and this, as well as his arbitrary habits, rendered him highly unpopular in London. When he was disgraced in 1232,[1] and took refuge in the Priory of Merton, the Londoners joyfully obeyed the royal orders to seize him—in fact, they were anxious to slay him on the spot.

The remaining forty years of Henry's long reign were occupied by a continual struggle against the Papal domination and that of the King's foreign connections and favourites. The Papal supremacy was exercised in the greediest and most tactless manner: not only did successive Popes use England as a perennial source of money supplies, but they sent Italian emissaries in gangs to carry out the work of extortion, and imposed foreign ecclesiastics in shoals upon the country. It seems almost incredible, but it is stated by contemporary chroniclers that many of these foreign priests could not speak a word of the language of their flocks. Matthew Paris is full of bitter remarks concerning various legates. One of them, Otho, was for years in England and departed loaded with money. In 1240 the centre of his nefarious activities was in London. He was followed in 1244 by a yet more intolerable representative of Mother Church named Master Martin, whose conduct was such that within a year he was bundled bag and baggage out of the kingdom. But the Papal exactions continued, and the result seems

[1] Matthew Paris, sub anno 1232. The chief authority for the remainder of this chapter is Matthew Paris, due allowance being made for his occasionally strong bias.

to have been that they implanted in English hearts a dislike of Papacy which never really vanished.

Henry's sources of supply were the citizens of London, the Jews and the clergy. Whenever he was short of cash—and he was generally in that condition—he would "tallage" the city or the Israelites. In 1230 he levied taxes on all impartially for an expedition to attempt to recover some of the French possessions which his father had lost. Fourteen years later he laid a tallage on London and the Jews in order to pay the bills of his tailors, his wine merchants and his wax chandlers, but when he received the money he paid "something on account" and wasted the rest. His attitude towards London always seems to have been that of fear and dislike. He envied the wealth of the great city, but his dislike was tempered by a wholesome fear of "killing the goose which laid the golden eggs." Sometimes he indulged in fits of childish temper over the prosperity of the city, which, do what he would, continued to increase. In 1246 Pope Innocent IV. sent to buy some costly bullion fringe for his robe from the London goldsmiths. His views are given (doubtless with English gall) by Matthew Paris: "England is our garden of delight: it is an inexhaustible well abounding with good things." He was so much delighted with his new gewgaws that he ordered more, and the London merchants made a good bargain, but nevertheless they did not fail to let fall unpleasant remarks as to Roman greed.

One comes to the conclusion that London was rich enough to pay all Henry's demands without suffering to any great extent: but their illegality and capriciousness was a constant source of irritation. The citizens put up with much, probably suspecting that, bad as was the royal government, that of the barons was likely to be worse; and, notwithstanding his exactions, there was a certain amiability about Henry which rendered him not

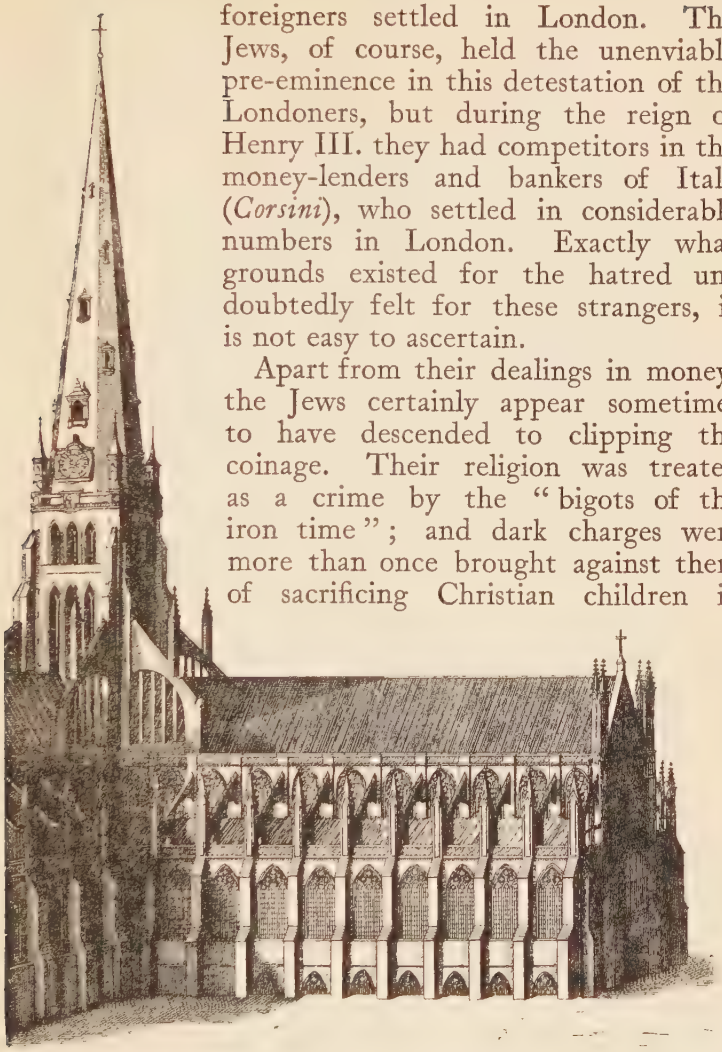
absolutely detested. The real trouble was his extravagance towards his many foreign relatives and his lavish expenditure on building and art. To meet the huge bills he ran up in the erection of his splendid abbey church at Westminster, many thousands of the marks extorted from London must have gone. But London was also spending money on its own adornment. In 1240 St Paul's Cathedral was more or less completed and solemnly consecrated, and about the same time the Temple Church was also finished, as was the fine church of St Mary Overie in Southwark, now St Saviour's Cathedral —all of them revealing in their latest work the new pointed style of architecture now known as the Early English period of Gothic. On the whole it seems that, despite everything, London was growing steadily in wealth and power.

Something in the nature of a municipal revolution appears to have been in progress within the city. Hitherto the government had been entirely in the hands of the wealthy merchants—the *Ordo*, as a Roman jurist would have termed them. But now the "craft gilds," composed of the handicraft tradesmen, were beginning to challenge the supremacy of the aristocratic trade gilds. It seems probable that they were the chief exponents of the anti-royal policy of the city. In 1261 they were supported by a sympathetic Mayor, Thomas Fitz-Thomas and, according to the disgusted Fitz-Thedmar, who was an alderman and a royalist, he so pampered the "city rabble" that they obtained the first voice in the city. The gloomy anticipation that "the end of all things" was near at hand must have been voiced by the elderly merchants, as they discussed the future of their city with others as wealthy and as conservative as themselves.

One sentiment the trade gilds and the craft gilds shared in common: it was a violent aversion for the

foreigners settled in London. The Jews, of course, held the unenviable pre-eminence in this detestation of the Londoners, but during the reign of Henry III. they had competitors in the money-lenders and bankers of Italy (*Corsini*), who settled in considerable numbers in London. Exactly what grounds existed for the hatred undoubtedly felt for these strangers, it is not easy to ascertain.

Apart from their dealings in money, the Jews certainly appear sometimes to have descended to clipping the coinage. Their religion was treated as a crime by the "bigots of the iron time"; and dark charges were more than once brought against them of sacrificing Christian children in



THE EARLY ENGLISH TOWER AND CHOIR OF OLD ST PAUL'S.

These portions of the Cathedral were not remodelled by Inigo Jones, and thus Hollar's engraving shows the untouched mediaeval structure with the spire (completed in 1315), which had been destroyed by lightning in 1561, added by the 17th-century engraver. The choir was dedicated in 1240.

unholy rites. A notorious case of this kind was the affair of Hugh of Lincoln, which occurred in 1255. Hugh was a boy of ten, who was found dead in a Jewish house, and it was universally believed, by no one more firmly than Matthew Paris, that he had been crucified in imitation of Jesus. Ninety-one Jews of Lincoln were dragged to London and packed into the dungeons of the Tower for trial and judgment. Eighteen were condemned and hanged: most of the remainder who survived their incarceration seem to have been liberated. Whether the charge were true it is useless to enquire: it would not be safe to pronounce that the Jews of that age were incapable of such an act of fanaticism, but one distrusts mediaeval judgment in cases of that type.

When the discontent against the weak government of Henry III. came to a head, London was strongly anti-royalist. It is well to beware of the error of supposing that Henry's opponents were unselfish patriots. Some there were whose motives were excellent, but there was also much self interest evident. Nor can the anti-royalists be described as patriots: they were very ready to enlist on their side the restless Welsh princes, the inveterate enemies of England. These things should be remembered, even admitting that Henry III. was untrustworthy as a king and unstable as a man. The strangest feature is that the baronial leader, Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester, was one of the foreigners whose introduction into England by the King was one of the chief charges against him. The name of Earl Simon "the Righteous" became almost a household word in England, and that he was, as compared with those about him, an upright man, cannot be doubted, but he was hardly an English hero, nor was his character perfect. Yet in the main his aims were just. They were directed to something like constitutional govern-

ment, something which would impose a check upon uncontrolled royal tyranny and caprice.

When the crisis came the commons of London, under its "democratic" Mayor, Thomas Fitz-Thomas, stood solidly by Earl Simon, but the upper classes, led by John de Gisors, pepperer, who had been thrice mayor, were clearly hostile to him. The ex-mayor had the Bridge gates locked, and actually threw the keys into the Thames. The commons, however, obtained the upper hand; the baronial troops were admitted into the city and, as a matter of course, they signalised their entry by a massacre of Jews. It might be said that the Londoners were to some extent responsible for the actual outbreak of hostilities. In the summer of 1263 the city fathers acted as mediators between the King and the barons. Henry was residing in the Tower and, being as usual in want of funds, he ordered, or permitted, his son Prince Edward to seize the money held in trust by the Templars, who added to their other activities that of banking. This exasperated the citizens and when, a few days later, Queen Eleanor endeavoured to sail up the Thames to less disturbed quarters at Windsor, she was stopped when her barge reached London Bridge. She was assailed with stones, mud and offal, and abuse was freely showered upon her. For the insult she afterwards made a magnanimous return, but naturally her husband and her son were bitterly exasperated.

When Earl Simon and the barons met the King in battle at Lewes, on May 14, 1264, he (de Montfort) had with him a strong force of Londoners, who there paid dearly for their insult to the Queen, for they were broken by Prince Edward's fierce charge and pursued and slaughtered for miles. But the victory was with Simon, and for a year he ruled England, although not very successfully, it must be confessed. In 1265 he met his fate at Evesham, and London learned the meaning

of the term *Vae Victis!* The mayor Fitz-Thomas was deposed, and was for a long time confined at Windsor. Sixty of his most prominent supporters were reduced to beggary, and a fine of 20,000 marks was levied.

For five years there was no election. Sir Hugh Fitz-Otes, Constable of the Tower, was Warden. But better counsels at length prevailed. Queen Eleanor made a noble return for the unchivalrous treatment which she had received from the city by interceding on its behalf, and the King, facile as usual, permitted himself to be placated. After a time Prince Edward also lived down his animosity and, in 1270, on his intercession, the Londoners recovered the right of electing their mayor and sheriffs.

The first mayor after the restoration was John Adrian, apparently one of the civic aristocracy: the second was Walter Hervi, as decidedly a democrat and fosterer of the craft gilds. Therefore, it is not surprising to learn that he was ousted in 1274 and apparently reduced to insignificance. His work did not, however, die: the inferior gilds had yet forty years of struggle for equality before them, but they could not be ignored and, in 1319, their claims were at last recognised by royal sanction.

CHAPTER V

LONDON UNDER THE FIRST THREE EDWARDS

1272 TO 1377

THE accession of Edward I. might not in itself seem to be of much promise to the Londoners whom he had ridden down at Lewes. The performance, however, proved better than the promise. Edward was the first really national King of England since the Conquest. He was returning from his hopeless but gallant enterprise in the Holy Land, when, at Capua in Italy, he heard of his father's death. This was in January 1273, but he was detained in France on diplomatic business, and did not reach England until August 2, 1274. But so thoroughly was England weary of civil strife and disorder that there was not a shadow of disturbance during the period of nearly two years between the death of Henry III. and Edward's arrival at Dover.

On August 19 the new king was solemnly crowned amid the Gothic glories of the new Abbey Church at Westminster, and forthwith began the serious work of his long reign. During the whole time London was, as a rule, loyal and zealous. The citizens growled now and then at the royal exactions of taxes, but there was little real discontent, for Londoners were not slow to understand the difference between the weak caprice of Henry III. and the firm, if sometimes heavy, rule of his capable son.

London's Mayor in 1274 was Henry de Waleys, a commercial magnate of great influence both in England and Guienne, whose name, like that of his younger contemporary Wallace the "Scot," undoubtedly proclaims a British origin. He may have had something to do with one of Edward's first great works—the reform of the coinage, which was in a truly woeful state, debased

and clipped almost beyond recognition. A new coinage was commenced at the Tower, and the Superintendent or " Master of the Exchange " was Gregory de Rokesley, another prominent London magnate, a wool stapler, goldsmith and banker, whose practical experience was doubtless of the utmost value to his king.

The royal inquisition into the state of the currency disclosed a terrible amount of falsification and clipping among the Jews, who were not, however, without English confederates, including several Londoners. Edward was ruthlessly just: he hanged everyone who was found guilty—280 Jews and many Englishmen—but reprieved all who were not convicted. The new money appeared in 1279; its distinctive feature was that the silver pennies, half-pennies and farthings (=fourthing) were coined as separate pieces: hitherto there had been only the penny, which was cut into halves and quarters when necessary.

The winter of 1279 was marked by a long period of extreme cold.[1] The snow lay on the ground for some months, apparently from Christmas to March. The Thames was frozen over, and under the pressure of the ice five arches of London Bridge collapsed, but whether north or south of the chapel is not recorded. It would seem that from the first the foundations or the masonry had not been of the best quality, and the upkeep of the structure had lately been neglected. The Queen Mother, Eleanor, had been granted the bridge-tolls in return for her intercession on behalf of Londoners after the defeat of Simon de Montfort at Evesham, but, lacking business-like qualities, she had forgotten that there must be provision for repairs. Thus, between bad workmanship and lack of care in maintenance, London's first stone bridge was ruinous within seventy years of completion. Comparing this with the recent collapse of an arch of

[1] Wm. Rishanger (Riley), p. 96.

EXAMPLES OF MEDIAEVAL COINS MINTED IN LONDON.

1. Silver Sceatta, 6th to 7th centuries, LVNDONIA on obverse. 2. Silver penny of Halfdene the Dane, with London monogram and a cross on the reverse. 3. Silver penny of Ecgberht: on reverse + LVNDONIA CIVIT[AS]. 4 and 5. Silver pennies of Alfred, on reverse of 5 is the name of the moneyer, TILEVINE 6. Silver penny of Athelstan: on the reverse ÆLFSTAN MO[NETA] LOND[ONIA] CI[VITAS]. 7. Silver penny of Cnut. 8. Silver penny of Eadward the Confessor, with the short cross. 9 and 11. Silver halfpenny and quarter-penny (= farthing) of Henry III., with long cross. 10. Silver halfpenny; and 12. Silver farthing, both of Edward III.

(*British Museum.*)

Waterloo Bridge only 108 years after its completion, one is compelled to admit that, after six centuries of progress, the bridge-builders of 1817 had not achieved much in the way of stability.

Old London Bridge with its twenty arches acted as a weir giving a waterway of only 337 feet against the present 690, and in this way held the low-water level 5 feet above that of to-day. As a consequence, the piers of the mediaeval bridge were subjected to a much greater strain with every tide than that which existing Thames bridges are required to endure.

The work of restoration was promptly taken in hand. Apparently the decay was so far advanced that something like a general rebuilding was necessary. To obtain means a Royal Warrant empowered the collection of voluntary subscriptions all over the kingdom. In 1281 another warrant was issued imposing a toll on all who used the bridge, at the rate of a penny per horseman, a halfpenny per pack of goods, and a farthing per foot passenger, the proceeds of which were to be devoted to the rebuilding.[1] It is clear from the wording of these warrants, that at this date houses had been constructed upon the bridge, and as houses are mentioned in connection with the burning of the bridge in 1212, only four years after its completion, one may infer that these timber additions came almost as soon as the cement was dry.

A year after the imposition of the bridge-toll, all London was in the streets to witness a sight not very agreeable to modern eyes—the exposure on the Tower of the head of Llewellyn ap Gruffyd, the last independent prince of North Wales.[2] In 1283 the ghastly trophy of victory was matched by another—that of Llewellyn's

[1] *Patent Rolls*, 1280-81, 25-27.

[2] *Rishanger's Chron.* (Riley), p. 101. Matthew of Westminster, sub anno 1282.

brother David.[1] The conquest of Wales was much before the eyes of London during these years. At the last rising of David and Llewellyn in 1282, the city gave an aid of 6000 marks, which was brought to Edward in Wales by the indefatigable le Waleys and his coadjutor, Rokesley. Both of them, with four other magnates of London, were present at the assembly at Shrewsbury which tried and condemned David.

The exposure on the Tower was a piece of grim humour on Edward's part. The stubborn resistance of the Welsh had been largely due to a prophecy that a Welsh prince would be crowned in London when money "was made round." The new coinage of half and quarter pennies was held to have fulfilled half the prediction. The second half was now also fulfilled; but not as the Welsh bards had hoped.

In 1284 there were rejoicings to celebrate the birth of Prince Edward at Caernarvon, and the royal jewels of Llewellyn were offered at the shrine of St Edward in Westminster Abbey.[2] They were followed next year by the "Croizneth," a supposed fragment of the Holy Cross, the palladium of Wales, which was carried in solemn procession to Westminster.

The year 1285 was marked by a curious and notable event—the suspension of the mayoralty.[3] It arose out of a peculiar action by Rokesley who was then Mayor. For reasons unknown and obscure, he refused to wait upon the royal justiciars in Session at the Tower, according to custom. It would seem that his action was by connivance with the royal officials: perhaps the King wished to have a more direct control over a city which

[1] *Rishanger's Chron.* (Riley), p. 101. Matthew of Westminster, sub anno 1283.

[2] Matthew of Westminster.

[3] Sharpe, *London and the Kingdom*, p. 120 *sqq.*; *Liber Albus*, I. 16; *Chron. Edward I. and II.*, Rolls Series, I. 94

was so inclined to get out of hand. In any case, there was no mayor for thirteen years, his place being taken by a *Custos* or Warden appointed by the King. The change was nominal; the Warden was strictly enjoined to observe the liberties and customs of the city, and in fact the holders of the office seem at once to have developed Londonian sympathies. The post was held in turn by Ralph de Sandwich and John le Breton. In 1298 the right to elect their mayor was restored to the citizens, their choice falling once more upon Henry le Waleys.[1]

In 1290 took place the expulsion of the Jews,[2] who had been settled in the land, and especially in London, for over two centuries. It was a popular act: the Israelites were undoubtedly hated. There were faults on all sides. They were usurers as a matter of course, and it was not recognised that the high interest which they charged was largely due to the fact that their own resources were at any moment liable to be depleted by royal exaction. When a wealthy Jew, such as Aaron of York, was suddenly called upon by Henry III. for a loan of 4000 marks, which he would probably never see again, he had to recoup himself elsewhere. There is no doubt that many of them acted as the agents of rich landowners in grinding their tenants, and the commercial morality of the baser Jewish element was not high, as must always be the case with an oppressed race.

It cannot be supposed that there was no solid basis of fact for the charges of coin-clipping and forgery so often brought against the Jews. Robert Grosseteste thought them a pest to the nation, so did Simon de Montfort, although his opinion was less weighty than that of the saintly bishop. Edward did not love them: he found the Italian bankers more equitable in their dealings. Many of the latter were already settled in

[1] Letter Book B, folio 93.

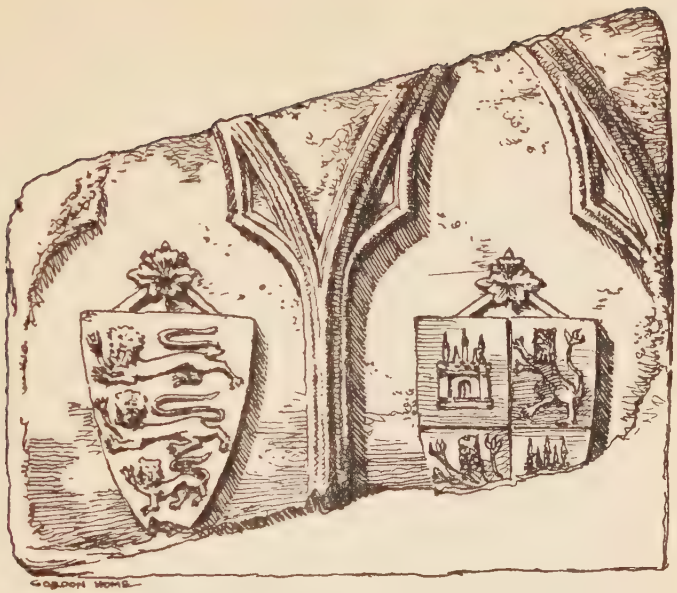
[2] Matthew of Westminster.

London, and Edward had already consulted them. Lastly Edward, like his parents but unlike his grandfather, was a sincerely religious man in a somewhat narrow sense, and religious feeling possibly lent its aid to bias his judgment.

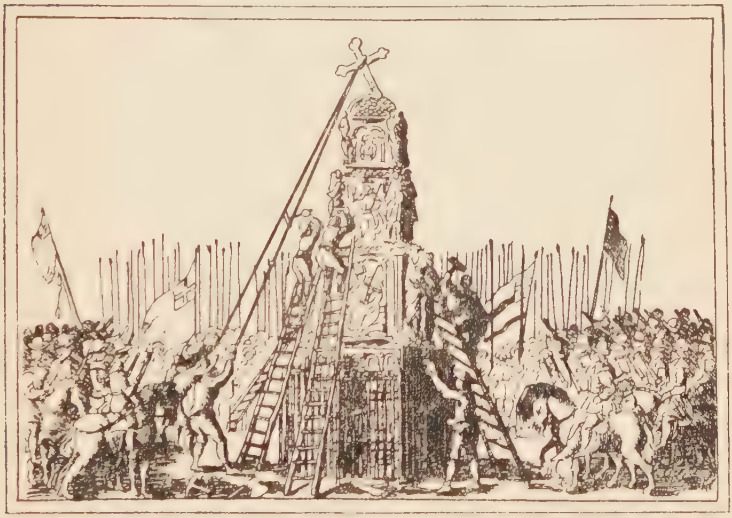
In any case, the deed was done, and very thoroughly done. Sixteen thousand Jews were deported from England, and nearly four centuries were to elapse before they again obtained a footing in the country. Terrible scenes occurred during the deportation, for country people and seamen alike took every opportunity of venting their hatred upon the unhappy race. For this concession to popular feeling the King obtained a grant of a fifteenth on capital.

Some moralists might find the punishment for this action in the blow which befell him in the same year. In November 1290 his beloved wife Eleanor of Castile, who had lived with him for thirty-six years in storm and sunshine, died. Her body was brought from Lincoln to be interred by the shrine of St Edward at Westminster. In Cheapside the bier rested for a while, in order that the Londoners might pay the last honours to the dead, and on the spot was set up one of the famous crosses of which so few survive to tell of a deep and pure affection in a licentious age.

Edward's mother died within less than a year of his wife. Her last years had been passed in quiet devotion and beneficence at Ambresbury (Amesbury) Abbey: although her former unpopularity had long since disappeared there was naturally no such display of grief as at the obsequies of Eleanor of Castile. The Queen Mother's body was buried at Amesbury; but her heart was brought to London, and interred in the Church of the Greyfriars near Newgate. William of Rishanger accuses the Friars of making money out of their possessions "like all their kind of every order."



A Portion of the Eleanor Cross in Cheapside.
The arms of England (left), those of Castile (right), appear on the shields.



The Destruction of the Eleanor Cross in Cheapside during the Commonwealth.

Two large fragments of sculptured stone, showing the greater parts of three panels of what appear to have belonged to the base, are now preserved in the Guildhall Museum. Two panels are shown above.

By the passing of his mother, the King was left almost alone: he had only one son, a child seven years old and showing little sign of promise.

After 1290 Edward knew no peace. Scottish troubles and French troubles came upon him, and the expulsion of the Jews involved him in financial difficulties.

It seems that London needed careful handling, for there are signs that it resented the King's demands for money. Yet it apparently supported him to the last, though showing a sturdy independence in matters affecting its liberties. When war threatened from France in 1294 it provided three ships, and next year sent a special troop of forty men-at-arms and fifty crossbowmen for coast defence.

At this time Edward demanded half the capital of the clergy throughout the kingdom, and London thus saw something of the process of exaction. In the treasury of St Paul's there lay £2000. The King's officers seized it all! A tenth was levied on the property of the knighthood and a sixth on the capital of merchants. The Dean of St Paul's, William de Montfort, plucking up his courage, went to Westminster in the hope of recovering some of the cathedral's wealth, but when he came into the royal presence Edward's look was so terrible that the unfortunate priest dropped dead at his feet. Edward, if Matthew of Westminster may be trusted, was not affected by the tragic event; he certainly continued his exactions resolutely to the end. He overawed his turbulent barons, extricated himself from his French difficulties, and wore down the resistance of the stubborn Scots.

London had its share in these strenuous doings of Edward's later years. Parliament after Parliament was held at Westminster: the harassed clergy held convocation in St Paul's, and doubtless compared King Edward to that Pharaoh who hardened his heart. His differences

with his people culminated in that strange scene which took place in Westminster Hall on July 14, 1297,[1] when Edward, then fifty-eight years of age, standing on the dais before a great assemblage of all estates of the realm, suddenly burst into tears and owned that in his late proceedings he had been prompted by exasperation and not by principles of justice.

In 1295 London saw a curious sight. Sir Thomas de Turberville, a knight, had entered into treasonable communication with France, sending full information regarding the King's difficulties and advising a French invasion in support of William Wallace, who was now in revolt in Scotland. He was seized, condemned and put to death with special indignity. Orders were given that he should be dragged to the gallows on a raw bull's hide, attended by four hangmen clothed as devils, who all the way taunted the miserable wretch with his crimes and approaching end, and battered him with cudgels and goads. After thus suffering more than the pangs of death, he was hanged.

A year after Edward's remarkable admission in Westminster Hall, London had tidings of the great victory of Falkirk. It was welcome news, for the ravages of Wallace had made him the terror of England, and when, seven years afterwards, the once dreaded warrior was brought in chains to London there was much fierce rejoicing. To the Scots he was a pure patriot; to the English a "man of Belial, an outcast from pity, a robber, a sacrilegious man, an incendiary and a murderer!"[2] So much for differing views of the same person. Terrible stories were told of his barbarities for which he was not, in all probability, personally responsible. He was committed to the custody of William de Leyre, an

[1] Matthew of Westminster, *Chron. Edward I. and II.*

[2] Matthew of Westminster, sub anno 1304; W. Rishanger (Riley), sub anno 1304, p. 225.

Alderman of the city, before trial in Westminster Hall. The verdict was, of course, a foregone conclusion. Wallace was convicted of treason, sacrilege and robbery, condemned to death with the usual frightfulness and his head fixed over the entrance gate of the Bridge. It is not pleasant to read the un-English exultation of the chronicler at the death of a fallen foe.

Another and more picturesque scene occurred in London in 1306.[1] Robert Bruce, after playing fast and loose for many years, had declared himself King of Scotland, and Edward, though sixty-seven years old, prepared to crush him. Before the King set out for the North he knighted hundreds of noble youths, who camped in the Temple Gardens, and kept their vigil before the ceremony in the beautiful church which is still one of the mediaeval glories of London. At the banquet which ended the ceremony two white swans were brought in, and the white-haired monarch, raising his hands, swore over them that he would be avenged upon the perjured Scots. How grimly he kept his vow history records.

The letter books of the city throw some light upon internal affairs at this time. They show that London, after its successive burnings, was full of ramshackle dwellings in spite of the "Fitz-Ailwyne" enactments of 1189 and 1212, which forbade the use of thatch, and ordered that party walls should be of stone to a height of sixteen feet. Over a century later it was necessary to enact that roofs should be tiled.[2] As late as 1302 there were a number of houses which had thatched roofs.[3] Orders had to be issued compelling the owner to re-roof with tiles by a given date. This particular case seems to mark the period when thatch disappeared from London.

[1] *Chron. Edward I. and II.*, Rolls Series, I. 132.
[2] *Liber Albus* (Riley), fol. 213 a. [3] Letter Book C, folio 65.

There were pigsties in the streets; swine wandered about unhindered until 1292, when men were appointed to kill these offensive strays. Orders had repeatedly to be issued to keep the streets and the streams clear of noxious refuse and sewage, all of which gives a curious picture of the city which, to the poverty-stricken Romans of that time, seemed a well of riches. Life and property were not particularly secure, especially at night: one hears of brawling, and that some of it must be attributed to the national vice of hard drinking, is shown by an ordinance of 1297 closing all taverns at curfew—an hour which fluctuated. Some quaint light is thrown upon the customs of the city by the information, in a letter of 1300, that the repair of the gateway of Bishopsgate devolved upon the Bishop because he received one stick from every cart of firewood passing through it.

Otherwise it is interesting to note that the city kept its reputation for pride and independence. The Bishop wished to enclose for his own purposes two woods at Stepney; Walter de Langton, Bishop of Chester, the powerful Treasurer, desired to enclose a park at Greenwich, but the Corporation would have none of such encroachments which were *contrary to the freedom of the city*. For the same reason the city declined to surrender certain prisoners to the Treasurer. The Countess of Gloucester was courteously but firmly asked for justice for certain citizens who had been molested by her retainers. All of which indicates a city very strong, very rich, and entirely confident of its strength and influence.

Edward II.'s troubled reign naturally did not leave London undisturbed. The weak King was never popular: his extravagance and predilection for foreign favourites speedily alienated his subjects. His bold and spirited French wife, Isabelle of France, seems on the contrary

rather to have taken the fancy of the Londoners: the city was so lavishly decorated when she first visited it that it was compared to the New Jerusalem.[1]

During the earlier part of the reign London seems to have been loyal enough. It supplied the King both with men and money for his Scottish wars, and was more or less on his side in his early differences with his barons. The city held a week's festivity in 1312 to celebrate the birth of a son, afterwards Edward III., to the King and Queen. But the King soon spoilt his popularity by the "tallage" which he levied on the city. Had he been successful against the Scots, the disaffection would, doubtless, have been fleeting, but Edward went from failure to defeat, ending in the overthrow of Bannockburn, in 1314. London sent one hundred and twenty arbalestriers or crossbowmen to strengthen the garrison of Berwick after that rout,[2] and the border town was saved for the time, only to fall in 1318. In the King's fruitless attempt to recover the fortress in that year, London supplied a picked contingent, which was thanked by Edward for their good conduct.[3]

Three years later the Mayor, Hamo de Chigwelle, played not unsuccessfully the part of mediator between the King and his rebellious barons headed by the Earls of Lancaster and Hereford; and next year a force of six hundred mounted Londoners helped Edward to overthrow the Earls.[4] But his conduct when victorious, and still more that of his favourites the two Despensers, alienated the citizens again. There seem to have been two parties, however, and there is mention of fights in the streets, not improbably connected with divisions of political opinion.

[1] *London and the Kingdom*, I. 132.
[2] Letter Book D, folio 165.
[3] Letter Book E, folio 84; Mem. 128-9.
[4] *London and the Kingdom*, 152; *French Chron.*, p. 255.

One of the barons connected with Lancaster was Roger Mortimer, Lord of Wigmore. Imprisoned in the Tower in 1322, he escaped next year with the aid of two aldermen, Richard de Betoyn and John de Gisors, who clearly belonged to the anti-royalist party in the city. But for three years there was no outbreak, although it is said that the Londoners bitterly hated the Treasurer, Walter de Stapeldon, Bishop of Exeter, upon whom fell the chief burden of the unpopularity properly deserved by Edward and his favourites. De Stapeldon was a man of high personal character, a patron of learning and art, and an excellent administrator but, brought up in the school of Edward I., his political ideal was fidelity to his first master's son, and for that he was destined to pay with his life.

The crisis came in September 1326. Queen Isabelle had for some time been estranged from her husband, alleging, perhaps with truth, that he was faithless to her. Certainly he had treated her badly, and when, in 1324, complications arose with France, she offered, obviously with sinister intent, to visit her brother Philip the Handsome and negotiate an agreement. She took with her Prince Edward and, once safely out of the kingdom, refused to return unless the Despensers were dismissed. Next she became intimate with Roger Mortimer with whom she lived in open adultery, and finally landed near Harwich proclaiming that she intended to avenge the death of Lancaster and expel the Despensers.

In this way she gained the adhesion of all parties, and Edward, who was in London, became panic-stricken and fled to the West. The Queen sent two letters to the city explaining her intention. One of them was ignored; but when the second arrived, the majority of the aldermen overbore the Mayor, Hamo de Chigwelle, and it was published. Mayor and aldermen, however, do not seem to have definitely taken sides: their intention was

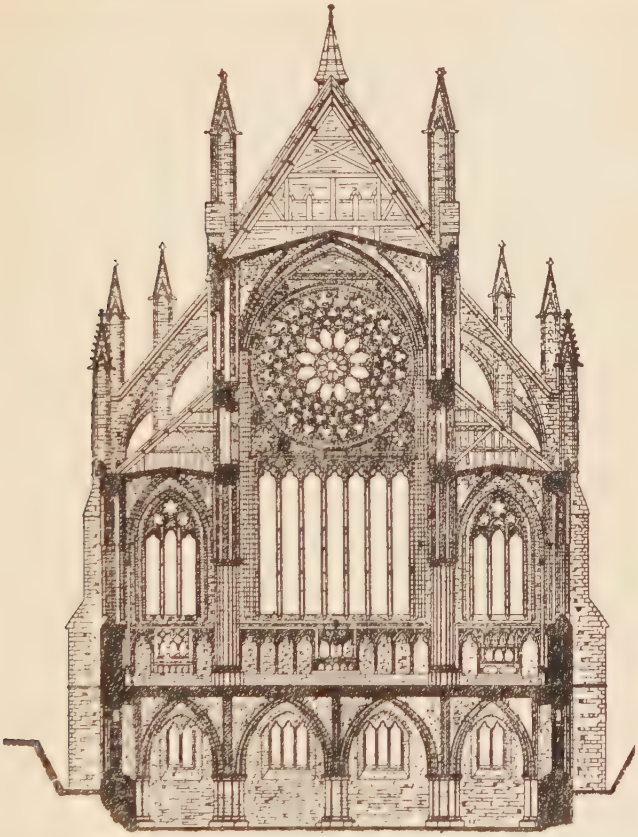
probably to mediate an agreement in concert with Walter de Stapeldon, who had remained at his post when his master fled.

The city mob, however, spoilt all these excellent intentions by breaking out into revolt. The Queen's proclamation had excited them, and nothing would satisfy them but the blood of whatever royal ministers were within their reach. A furious crowd beset the Mayor and Aldermen as they were going to Blackfriars, forced them to return to the Guildhall and to issue a proclamation that "the enemies of the King and Queen and their son" should leave the city. A certain John le Marshall, supposed to be a spy of Hugh le Despenser, was beheaded in Chepe; and then the crowd, having whetted its appetite, made for the Bishop of Exeter's house in the Strand.

Walter de Stapeldon was riding to meet the Mayor when he became aware of the tumult. He hurried down Fleet Street, intending perhaps to endeavour to address the people, but in face of their fury he was forced to make for St Paul's for sanctuary. As he reached the northern door, the mob fell upon him, dragged him from his horse, hurried him to Chepe and beheaded him together with two squires who had shared his peril.[1] The mangled corpses lay naked in Chepe exposed to the insults of the exulting crowd. The head was sent to Queen Isabelle at Gloucester and, after dark, the canons of St Paul's had sufficient courage to bring the body of the great statesman-bishop into their cathedral. In the morning, however, fearing fresh disturbances, they decided to get rid of the remains and sent the body to be interred in the churchyard of St Clement Danes. The Rector, John Mugge, refused it admittance, though to de Stapeldon he owed his benefice, and, incredible though it may seem, the corpse again

[1] *Chron. Edward I. and II.*, I. 315-16; *French Chron.*, p. 263.

lay neglected outside the churchyard until some poor women showed more courage and kindly feeling than the



A Sectional Drawing of the East End of Old St Paul's.

It is an imposing conception of the Early English period, and the effect of the elaborate rose window above the seven plain compartments below, when filled with painted glass, must have been superb. Beneath are shown the vaulted arches of the Crypt of St Faith.

ecclesiastics, and wrapping the insulted remains in such coverings as they could find, buried it where it lay in unconsecrated ground. Six months later the body was

exhumed and interred beneath a beautiful tomb which may still be seen at the north side of the high altar of Exeter Cathedral.

Meanwhile the mob was busy killing and plundering, in defiance of orders and proclamations issued by the helpless authorities. It was a situation which has been repeated more than once in London, the last occasion being during the Gordon Riots in 1782. The banking house of the Bardi, the famous Florentine financiers, was one object of the mob's rage which ended by a tumultuous rush into the undefended Tower, where they released all the prisoners.

In this manner the reign of Edward II. ended in London—a turmoil of riot and bloodshed, where no one appears to great advantage except the ill-fated Treasurer, who, whatever his faults, remained to the last at his post, and paid for his fidelity with his life.

There are various documents in the city records which give the impression that the authorities at this time were beginning to cope with internal disorders, also to pay some attention to sanitation. As to the turbulence of the Londoners there is plenty of testimony. Froissart,[1] who had experience of them, declares that they were the most dangerous branch of a very proud and dangerous people ; stern, hardy and brave with the thoroughly English (or British) characteristic of gaining courage while suffering slaughter instead of losing it. There seems to have been a good deal of brawling and misconduct after dark in the narrow unlighted streets, and one hears much of the trouble caused by prostitutes. Disorder often centred in ill-conducted taverns and, in 1331, a large number of innkeepers were arraigned on this charge.

The political discord of the reign crops up more than once. In 1320 Michael Mynot, a vintner, was deprived

[1] Froissart, *Hist.*, pp. 333-4 (Ed. Lyon, 1559).

of the Freedom of the city for having, in concert with a certain Robert de Kelsey and others, held meetings of ill-disposed people with the design of annulling the liberties of London. Two years later, John Waldeshif, the Serjeant, was charged with sowing discord and deprived of the Freedom and his post. His special offence seems to have been that he was advising the citizens to resist the collection of a grant of 2000 marks. Evidently he had taken up the position of resistance to arbitrary taxation: the magnates, on the other hand, were more or less upholders of the royal authority, however harshly exercised.

In 1320 one sees a beginning of what may be called town-planning improvements. The court of the Leaden Hall was paved,[1] and in the next few years a great many orders were made in regard to the paving and cleansing of streets.

Edward III. was, on his accession in 1327, a boy of fifteen, and at first was completely under the tutelage of his mother and her unprincipled paramour, Mortimer, who quickly rendered himself hated for his arrogance and greed of wealth, apart from the facts that he lived in adultery with the Queen Mother, and assumed more than the state of royalty. Public feeling was further excited against him on account of the necessary, but humiliating peace with Scotland, following upon a very successful Scottish raid into the Northern counties. The young King's marriage to the excellent princess, Philippa of Hainault, did not make any difference, but the birth of a son and heir to him, in June 1330, seemed thoroughly to arouse Edward to the painful degradation of his position. Though still only eighteen years of age, he acted with true Plantagenet vigour, and kidnapped Mortimer in Nottingham Castle. The unworthy adventurer who had tyrannised over England for three

[1] *Memorials of London*, p. 138.

years was then sent to London and incarcerated in the Tower. The young King, with that wise discretion which characterised him throughout his life, promptly took the nation into his confidence by means of a proclamation in which he recited the misdeeds of Mortimer and his associates, and declared his intention of ruling his kingdom henceforth in person. Mortimer was arraigned at Westminster before his peers assembled in Parliament, and they, somewhat forgetting their position as judges, condemned him forthwith, on the notoriety of the facts alone, to suffer death as a traitor. He was hanged, drawn and quartered at "The Elms," afterwards called Tyburn, near the present Marble Arch. Edward was now indisputably monarch of England, and remained so for more than forty years.

During the rule of Mortimer, London seems to have been in a perennially disturbed condition. There was a street fight on a large scale in 1327, in which the saddlers were pitted against a coalition of joiners, painters and lorimers.[1] Two years later special orders were again put forth to enforce the public peace. No one except royal attendants, baronial valets, and city officials was to go about armed, and no one was to remain out after curfew. In 1331 there was again an enquiry into the misconduct of innkeepers. The measures enacted by the city authorities were excellent in intention, but unfortunately there was nothing adequate in the way of a permanent police and thus enforcement of the orders was generally a sheer impossibility, except in regard to offences of a constant character.

By 1334 war was again in the air and, with brief intervals, a state of war prevailed for many years. Hostilities first broke out with Scotland, and London furnished 100 men-at-arms and 100 foot-soldiers to the

[1] Or Loriners—makers of bits, bridles, spurs and the metal work of saddles.

army which won the bloody fight of Halidon Hill and recovered Berwick permanently for England. The pay and equipment of the troops cost 1200 marks,[1] of which £68, 10s. 3d. went to the making of their uniforms, besides about 10s. which was expended in wine given *gratis* to the hard-working tailors. Before marching, the city gave a gratuity of 2s. to each foot-soldier. They did themselves well, these fourteenth-century citizen-soldiers of London, for the troop was accompanied by a minstrel, for whose musical services £5 were paid.[2]

Three years later another call, this time for 200 archers for the defence of Gascony, was made upon London. The cloth for their uniforms cost £59, 14s., and it is not quite without interest to note that the coats were red in colour. The archers were divided into two companies of 100 each, having 1 "Centenar," 4 "Vintainers" and 95 archers. One observes that in the fourteenth century, the relative importance of the highly-trained professional soldier in the ranks was much greater than to-day: the pay of the centenar (=captain) was only double that of a private archer. This time the Corporation did not pay a money gratuity, but gave the band a tun of wine at a cost of 50s.—obviously out of a shrewd suspicion that the men would certainly spend a bounty in drink, so that the city might as well give the wine outright; further, it cost less.

In the same year London furnished three ships to the fleet which Edward was collecting,[3] and there is some interesting information as to the manning. The "Jonette" had a master, a constable and 60 men, who seem to have been paid at the high rate of 6d. a day. The land contingent was only 100 men, but this is explained by the fact that, then as now, the

[1] Letter Book E, folio 2. The mark=13s. 4d.
[2] Letter Book F, folios 5, 9.
[3] *Ibid.*, folios 2, 3 and 18.

Londoners made excellent soldiers, and were so eagerly enlisted by the barons and professional captains, that the city had considerable difficulty in finding recruits for its own levy.[1] Probably, too, there was unwillingness to strip London of too many able-bodied men and craftsmen, for a large Franco-Genoese fleet was roving about the Channel, making descents on English ports. Piles were driven into the bed of the Thames[2] to obstruct the passage of hostile vessels, the wharves were palisaded, and military engines planted on the gates. This danger passed with the destruction, in 1340, of the French fleet at Sluys, in which a victory contingent from London took part. One of the ships was commanded by William Haunsard, a merchant of London and ex-sheriff, who distinguished himself greatly.[3]

The next years are filled with war and rumours of war, and with incessant demands by the King for money. The London magnates were patriotic but "canny": Edward III. was a notoriously bad debtor, and his requisitions were frequently exorbitant. In 1340, for example, he asked for £20,000! The city fathers protested and bargained. They offered 5000 marks (£3333, 6s. 8d.) and finally consented to go as high as £5000, which the King accepted with as good a grace as possible.[4] The Recorder recited a list of former aids and tallages, and Edward "commended the citizens in a friendly manner." Next year there was more money needed, and the city was called upon for no less than 26 ships to convey Sir Walter de Manny and a force of troops to Brittany.[5] Other requisitions were made in succeeding years. In 1346 the archers of London took part in

[1] "*Pleas and Memorials*," Roll A, 5.
[2] Letter Book F, folio 19.
[3] *Pleas and Memorials*, Roll A, 3.
[4] Letter Book F, folio 32 b.
[5] *Pleas and Memorials*, Roll A, 3, folio 3.

the victory of Crécy.[1] The citizens made a free gift to the King of 1000 marks, lent him 2000 more; and London's ships and levies were at the siege of Calais, which did not surrender until August 1347.

The gain of Calais caused much rejoicing, and a truce being afterwards concluded with France, there was a considerable improvement in trade and industry. Walsingham[2] says that "it seemed as if a new sun had arisen on account of the abundance of peace, of the plenty and the glory of victories." London was flooded with plunder from French cities sacked during the recent successful campaigns, and one result is said to have been a great taking to French fashions in dress among Englishwomen of the upper classes. The prestige of the King, who had humbled France and taken the Scottish monarch prisoner, was so great that the Electors of Germany wished to make him Holy Roman Emperor. England was for a brief span wild with joy and prosperity—prosperity soon to be ended by a fearful catastrophe.

In August 1348 the plague called "The Black Death" showed itself in Dorsetshire, and three months later it made its appearance in London. There has been considerable discussion as to the precise nature of this awful visitation, but it seems, upon the whole, clear that it was bubonic plague. It broke out in China, and drifted across Asia until, in 1347, it was at Constantinople, where it caused terrible havoc and materially aided the overthrow of the decaying Greek Empire. Next year it attacked Spain, Italy, France and Germany, whence it passed across to England.

All kinds of fables were invented to account for the pestilence. There is not much doubt that the plague period was also one of seismic and other natural disturb-

[1] Letter Book F, folios 121-5 b.

[2] Walsingham, *Hist. Angliae*, Rolls Series, I. 272.

ances, but they were too local to have originated the epidemic, though the panic-stricken people imagined that the earth had opened in yawning chasms to project into the atmosphere the destroying breath of the plague.

On the Continent the unhappy Jews did not escape: they were accused of poisoning the water supply, and in many cities there was added to the horror of the plague that of a massacre of the detested Israelites. Superstition added its terrors, and its absurdities. In the ravaged towns appeared bands of half-naked "Flagellants" who moved through the streets scourging themselves and proclaiming that all who did not join their peculiar fraternity would meet with punishment from heaven. In stolid, practical England the Flagellants do not seem to have met with much success, English common sense was too strong to be affected by religious extravagance, but on the Continent their visits maddened the ignorant populace and were particularly responsible for the massacre of the Jews.

The havoc caused by this visitation in England cannot be estimated. It has been supposed to have destroyed three-fourths of the population, but many of the figures are clearly wild exaggerations. It is, for example, quite impossible to accept the round figure of 50,000 given by Stow, as the number of those who were buried in the Spital Croft near West Smithfield.[1] Stow saw and read an inscribed stone bearing this statement, and there is no reason to doubt his veracity, but the inscription is suspicious: it was clearly of later date, and the number was a guess after the manner of mediaeval writers. In the same vein was a record that, in Norwich, 57,374 persons, beside religious and beggars, died. Such figures, however, are hardly credible. There is fair reason for believing that between one-third and one-half

[1] Stow, *Survey of London* (Kingsford), Vol. II. p. 81.

of the population of London perished. After ten years a third of the walled area was void of inhabitants.[1]

The main effect of this fearful visitation was to dislocate the economic structure of the kingdom. Labour became scarce, and the working man's services were so valuable that he could exact higher wages than before. The city records are full of efforts to fix the price of labour and so keep down the rise in wages.[2] Further, there was a tendency to migrate from one place to another, which the King strove to prevent by special ordinance: he also rebuked the Corporation of London for not enforcing the order strictly.[3]

These gloomy years were to some extent lightened by the glory of the famous naval victory of *L'Espagnols sur mer*, gained by Edward himself over a Spanish fleet, half traders, half pirates, and in any case anti-English, which had recently attacked the Bordeaux wine fleet. Two London ships, which must have been large, since they had fighting crews of 100 and 70 men respectively,[4] took part in the victory, as a result of which 14 large carracks were taken and several others sunk—24 in all.

An interesting inventory was taken in 1350 of the stores of London Bridge at Bridge House in Southwark.[5] It shows a quantity of Portland stone for repairs, some squared, some still in the rough, 400 baulks of oak; also 120 of elm for piles—evidently for the "sterlings" which protected the piers and so greatly narrowed the waterway.[6] There were three barges and boats and two pile-drivers. What is of more interest as relating to the buildings on the bridge, is that there were 14

[1] Letter Book G, folio 60.
[2] Letter Book F, folios 163, 168, 169, 181.
[3] *Ibid.*, folios 168, 191 b.
[4] *Ibid.*, folios 187 b, 188 b.
[5] *Ibid.*, folio 195.
[6] See p. 115.

wooden shops ready for immediate fixing, and 12,000 tiles for roofing.

Six years later, the Guildhall was the scene of much patriotic rejoicing when a letter from the Prince of Wales (the Black Prince), describing the victory of "Peyters" (Poitiers) was read out.[1] The missive is interesting for several reasons. In the first place, it is noteworthy that the Prince thought it necessary to address a special report to the great city. It is also clear that the Cardinal de Talleyrand-Périgord was busy endeavouring to negotiate an armistice several days before the battle. The most interesting point, however, is that the Prince's letter clears up all doubt as to the movements before the battle: he says quite plainly that he was endeavouring to retreat when the French attack developed. The letter was brought by his very dear Bachelor (Knight Bachelor) "Neele Loereng" in which name may be read that of Sir Nigel Loring, a famous soldier of the day.[2]

Six months later all London turned out in its best array to behold a sight which England never had seen and was never again to behold—that of a King of France led in triumph through its streets. A thousand of the principal citizens, in the dress, and carrying the banners of their respective gilds, with the Mayor at the head of the procession, received the Prince and his royal prisoner at Southwark. Thence they conducted them in state over the bridge and right through the city to the Savoy Palace in the Strand, where King John was to reside until such time as France could raise a king's ransom, modestly estimated by England at 3,000,000 *écus d'or*, equal to £450,000 in modern gold value, and with a purchasing power, in those days, fifteen to twenty times as great.

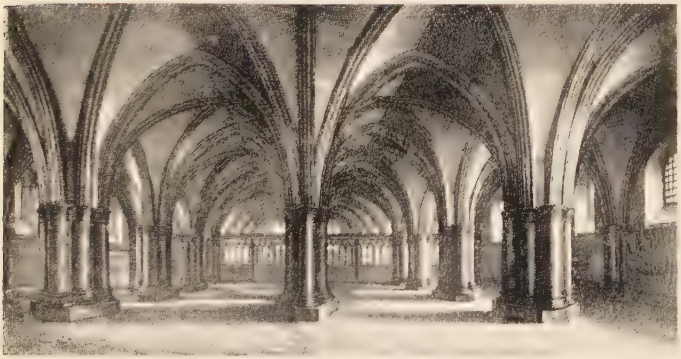
[1] Letter Book G, folio 53 b.

[2] The Sir Nigel of Sir A. Conan Doyle's romances *Sir Nigel* and *The White Company*.

A Crypt under a great London House.

It belonged to the Gisors family—by corruption the house came to be known as Gerrard's Hall. The site adjoins the fire station in Cannon Street.

A 13th Century Crypt in Leadenhall Street.



The Crypt under Old St Paul's associated with the destroyed Church of St Faith.

The captive monarch took his part in the pageant in royal robes mounted on a splendid white charger, while Prince Edward, much less ostentatiously arrayed, modestly bestrode a black palfrey (or hackney). It was a joyous day for London, and doubtless the citizens did not trouble themselves overmuch with the feelings of the captives, but enjoyed to the full the pomp and glitter.

One imagines that great care was taken to clean the streets on this festive occasion. There is only too much evidence that the state of the city was frequently most unsatisfactory, and in August of the same year the King drew attention to the accumulated foulness in different quarters. On January 8, 1362,[1] London was swept by a furious gale, which did great damage, necessitating much rebuilding and especially re-roofing. The occasion elicited yet another of the elaborate and futile ordinances to regulate the price of materials and wages.[2]

The triumphal entry of 1357 was followed by a truce with France lasting for two years. Then came a spectacular but not very successful invasion of France, followed, in 1360, by the Treaty of Bretigni (near Chartres), which marked the acme of the prosperity of Edward III. Of the vast ransom demanded, King John raised 600,000 crowns by the sale in matrimony of his daughter Isabelle to Gian Galeazzo Visconti, son of the Duke of Milan. But of the rest, only 400,000 crowns could be extracted from war-wasted and impoverished France, and when his son, Louis of Anjou, whom he had left in England as a hostage, broke his parole, King John honourably returned to captivity in 1364. He was treated with the respect due to one who prized his honour above all, but lived for only three months longer.

One curious incident of his later stay was his entertainment, together with King Edward, David II. of Scotland, and Pierre de Lusignan, King of Cyprus, by

[1] Letter Book G, folio 64. [2] *Ibid.*, folio 94.

Sir Henry Picard, a leading wine merchant, who had been Mayor in 1356. It was a remarkable testimony to the wealth and influence of the merchant princes of London that one of them should entertain four monarchs. After dinner, Sir Henry presided at gaming, apparently "keeping the bank." Pierre de Lusignan seems to have been a bad loser, for he grumbled when the dice went against him, whereupon the London merchant promptly offered to return his winnings! The ex-Mayor made it fairly clear that a few hundred nobles more or less might mean something to the poor King of Cyprus, but were of slight account to Henry Picard, Vintner of London. King John and King David, however, expostulated, taking the ground that a gentleman who played must pay his losses.[1] One would rather like to know what Picard said to his "lady Margaret" about King Pierre when the guests had departed. Also one would have been grateful had the hand of Time and the Great Fire spared to the present day the doubtless noble house near the Vintry where this notable entertainment took place.[2]

Sir Henry Picard being a vintner, one may note here the punishment of a vintner who sold bad wine. As it was in this same year (1364) Sir Henry may have had something to do with it. The offending tradesman was ejected from his calling, of course, and, in addition, he was made to drink a draught of his own nauseating stuff while the rest was poured over him, before he was committed to Newgate for a year and a day.[3]

The last ten years of Edward III. were marked by disaster and humiliation. The bulk of the possessions in France gained by the Treaty of Bretigni were lost,

[1] Froissart and Stow's Survey.

[2] The house of Sir John Crosby *was* so spared, but this generation made such a feeble effort to save it on its site that it was pulled down and, although re-erected at Chelsea, most of its romance has gone.

[3] Letter Book G, folio 141.

and in 1372 the English fleet was completely defeated off La Rochelle, so that London again began to feel unsafe and take measures for its defence. Yet the prosperity of the city does not seem to have declined and the energy and public spirit of its citizens were as great as ever. After the defeat of La Rochelle they built for naval defence a "barge" 80 feet long and 20 feet broad, well manned and equipped,[1] and the internal life of the city, as evidenced by the records, shows no sign of relaxing courage or enterprise.

Among the men coming to the front during this period may be named William Walworth, Mayor in 1374, and John Philipot,[2] a true precursor of Drake and Hawkins, who, when the government failed to protect commerce, fitted out a privateer squadron and effectually performed that duty, defeating a troublesome squadron under the Scots pirate Mercer, and thereby winning well-deserved credit. The letter books of the Corporation show the usual regulations as regards trade, gilds, and such matters. There was plainly enough a strong tendency towards combination among the journeymen-craftsmen which the gilds endeavoured to check. Considerable pains appear to have been taken to sanitate the city, due most probably to the ever present menace of the plague, which made its appearance at intervals after the deadly visitation in 1348-9. In 1374 Moorfields was leased for seven years to Thomas atte Ram[3] on condition that he saw to the regular cleansing of Walbrook: he was to receive, amongst other perquisites, anything of value which his scavengers might find in their operations. Next year there was a vote of £100 for cleaning out the city ditches, and the porters at the gates were bound by oath to exclude all lepers.

Other regulations show increasing attention to surgery.[4]

[1] Letter Book G, folio 304.
[2] Often given Philpot.
[3] *Ibid.*, folio 318.
[4] Letter Book G, folio 219.

In 1369 three Masters were sworn who were to examine into the capabilities of barber-surgeons before they should be permitted to practise. Seven years later, an ordinance was issued that no barber-surgeons from the country were to practise in London until they had been examined and passed as qualified by the wardens of the craft.[1]

The same year also saw a regulation of much interest, since it shows that already London was receiving coal in large quantities as fuel. Newcastle had begun to mine coal some eighty years before, but there was a prejudice against its use. Early in his reign, Edward III. had formally licensed such mining and, by 1369, the import of coal into London was so large that four "meters" or measurers of "sea-coal" were appointed by the Corporation. So long ago, therefore, as the middle of the fourteenth century, does one see the beginnings of the use of that fuel which has given to London its November fogs, when high noon may become as black as a moonless midnight.

The light thrown upon private affairs is also valuable. Especially interesting is the account of Robert de Brynkeleye,[2] a mercer, concerning the administration of the estate of Thomas-atte-Boure, a boy left under his guardianship. The lad's father left capital of £300 (say £4500 in modern gold value). It appears that money invested in London, "according to the custom of the city," paid the somewhat astonishing dividend of 20 per cent., making a total of £780 in the thirteen years of the guardianship to be added to the original capital of £300. Out of this £780 the guardian received one-half "according to the custom of the city." The lad's board is reckoned at 2s. per week, clothes £2 a year: schooling £1, 6s. 8d. a year for ten years; incidentals £13 in all, including the fees of a tutor at Oxford. The

[1] Letter Book H, folio 28. [2] Letter Book G, folio 317.

total outgoings, including the guardian's "share for his trouble," amounted to £509, 18s. 8d., so that young Master Thomas-atte-Boure was able to start in life with the respectable sum of £570, 1s 4d. to his credit or about £8500 in gold value. The enormous return on a small investment is obvious, so is the cheapness of living—something over £9 a year, or 3s. 6d. a week, including education at Oxford!

Yet another item, of deep interest to students of English literature, crops up in 1374, when Geoffrey Chaucer the poet was granted a life lease[1] of the house "above the Gate of Algate[2] with the rooms built over and a certain cellar beneath." Chaucer took the house on a repairing lease, the Corporation reserving to itself the right to inspect the premises at intervals and eject the occupier, if, within forty days, he did not execute such repairs as were recommended. The poet's selection of a dwelling in this quarter was due to the fact that he was about to be appointed a Comptroller of Customs in the Port of London. He resided there until 1386, when ill-fortune came upon him.

Evil days were upon London and England. The country was defeated and impoverished, and feared invasion. Disorder and dissension reigned at Court. The old king, since the death of his queen Philippa in 1371, had fallen under the dominion of an unprincipled mistress, Alice Perrers. The Black Prince, broken in health, died in 1376 and political power fell very much into the hands of his brother, John of Gaunt, a well-intentioned, but hot-tempered, man of narrow views and small ability. John and his advisers got rid of most of the royal ministers, including William of Wykeham, but their own administration was by no means a success.

The population was permeated by "Lollardy"—otherwise incipient Protestantism—and, to other troubles,

[1] Letter Book G, folio 321. [2] Now Aldgate.

was added the official persecution of the new religious movement by the bishops. London itself was in a most disturbed and faction-ridden condition, so much so that the King, or rather his Council, threatened in 1376 to intervene in the interests of law and order. Lollardy, civil politics, and jealousy among the trades all played a part, as well as the restiveness of the craftsmen as a body. The result was that the Corporation took the matter seriously in hand, and, in July, announced that in future, in order to avoid the disorder and tumult of large assemblies, the Mayor, Aldermen and Common Council were to be chosen from the incorporated Gilds and not otherwise.[1] This practically converted the government of the city into a trade-oligarchy. The change lasted only for eight years: in 1384 the old system of election by wards was restored.[2]

The prevailing discontent expressed itself in 1376 in the "Good Parliament," summoned largely at the instance of the Black Prince, now a dying man, but winning in these last months of his life a purer fame than that which he had gained in France. A searching enquiry was made into the malversation of public money, and several London magnates came out of it very badly. Richard Lyons and Adam de Bury, the latter of whom had been twice Mayor, were convicted of embezzlement. Lyons was imprisoned and his property confiscated: Adam de Bury fled to Flanders. The Parliament then fell foul of Alice Perrers, and succeeded in procuring her banishment, but the death of the Black Prince ended the work of reform. Alice was highly unpopular in London for several reasons.

When the Black Prince was dead, Lancaster had matters as he willed. A new Parliament, elected under

[1] Sharpe, *London and the Kingdom*, Vol. I. pp. 206-7; Letter Book H, folio 45 b.

[2] Letter Book H, folio 173.

his influence, reversed many of the acts of its predecessor. Lancaster was not popular in London by reason of his inefficiency as a general, and he did his best to increase it by proposing to abolish the mayoralty and revoke the franchise.[1] Next he insulted Courtenay, the Bishop, one of the proudest members of a proud family, but nevertheless popular with the Londoners. The occasion was on February 19, 1377. Courtenay had summoned to his presence John Wycliffe, the famous reformer, to answer charges which were probably in part religious, but also concerned with his political connection with John of Gaunt. In any case, the Duke, accompanied by the Earl Marshal Percy, went to the Lady Chapel of St Paul's to support Wycliffe, and there ensued a stormy scene.

Percy began by using his authority to compel the crowd to stand back, and allow Wycliffe to pass through to the Lady Chapel. This action nettled the proud Bishop, who said that had he realised that Percy would act in such a manner he would have forbidden his entrance. John of Gaunt struck in to the effect that bishop or no bishop the Earl Marshal would use his authority to keep order. In the chapel, Percy demanded a seat for Wycliffe, which Courtenay at once refused, saying "it is contrary to law and reason." Then the hot tempers of Prince and Bishop blazed out furiously. The Bishop made some attempt to keep the dignity of a prince of the Church, but John of Gaunt turned red with rage and muttered, or was supposed to have muttered, that he would drag Courtenay out by the hair of his head! The spectators in the body of the cathedral—Londoners exasperated at the Duke's mismanagement and high-handedness—broke in, crowded round their Bishop and raised a furious tumult. Wycliffe quietly withdrew and no attempt was made to

[1] *Chronicon Angliae*, p. 120.

molest him, but John of Gaunt and Percy had to be escorted home by their guards. The blood of the fierce Londoners was up: they seized their weapons and poured out into Ludgate intending to attack John's palace of the Savoy in the Strand. He was, however, just sitting down to supper in the city at the house of a friend, John of Ypres. A man-at-arms hurried in with the alarming news, and the company broke up in haste. The Duke took refuge at Kennington with his sister-in-law the Princess of Wales, and the Savoy was only saved from destruction by the intervention of Bishop Courtenay, who must have enjoyed a certain grim satisfaction in thus protecting his enemy's property. Before he could arrive, however, the mob had murdered an unfortunate priest whom they took to be the Lord Marshal Percy. Naturally the Duke was wildly enraged, and further insults offered to him by the mob increased his fury. Deputations of the more important citizens waited on the worn-out old King to assure him that the riots were mere outbreaks of the worst elements of the populace, and, though past active exertion, he did his best to smooth the troubled waters. The mayor, Adam Staple, was removed and replaced by Nicholas Brembre, but John of Gaunt was not satisfied and vented his anger in violent language.

King Edward III. died at Shene on June 21, 1377. He had reigned for more than fifty years and there is a sad pathos in the description of the passing of this once proud, brave and magnificent monarch. It is said that Alice Perrers robbed the jewelled signet ring from his helpless fingers and that the aged King lay forsaken until a good priest found his way to the room and comforted the dying man in his last moments.[1]

The scene of this melancholy end of one of England's

[1] *Chronicon Angliae*, 136-7, 142-3.

G. H.

THE EARLIEST ARMOUR IN THE TOWER OF LONDON.

It was found thrown aside in the armoury store, but is now carefully preserved. The period is probably that of the end of the 14th or early in the 15th century.

(*Armoury—Tower of London.*)

TWO-HANDED SWORD, *c.* 1400,

and a youth's Sword and Scabbard of the time of Edward III., found in the Thames, near London.

(*London Museum.*)

greatest sovereigns is marked by a tablet on one of the houses standing on the site of the mediaeval palace, which Henry VII. renamed Richmond after the town and castle in Yorkshire, from which he obtained the title borne by him of Earl of Richmond.

CHAPTER VI

HOW LONDON FARED UNDER RICHARD II

1377 TO 1399

It was thus amid disaster without and disorder within that the reign of the splendid Edward III. ended. To a heritage involved in difficulties succeeded Richard II., the brave, unstable, and magnificent son of Edward the Black Prince. He was then only a boy of eleven years of age, and was faced with every kind of trouble.

London appears from the first to have taken the lead in meeting the public danger. At the beginning of the reign it subscribed a loan of £5000;[1] in 1379 another of the same amount; and a year later one of £2000. A reconciliation was effected with John of Gaunt, with the help of the young King and his mother, John Philipot being the prime mover in the matter. Richard promised (or was made to promise) that he would be the friend of the city and protect its interests as if they were his own. This annoyed the barons, who nicknamed the young monarch the "King of the Londoners" and some of them endeavoured to oust the Mayor and Aldermen from their privilege of acting as royal cupbearers at the Coronation banquet. Robert Belknap, the Chief Justice of the Common Pleas, told them that they could best employ themselves in washing up the pots and pans! But the Londoners soon brought him to his senses. On one of the triumphal arches in Cheapside they set a hideous effigy of Master Robert in the ignominious attitude of vomiting! The whole coronation procession had the pleasure of viewing this fourteenth-century specimen of caricature as it passed by, and when the City Fathers appeared to claim their privilege poor Belknap had not a word to say. The Mayor duly

[1] Letter Book H, folios 76-7, 108, 129.

officiated and, as before, was presented with a gold cup.

The city was internally in a disturbed condition. Politically there were Lancastrian and anti-Lancastrian parties, the former headed by William Walworth and John of Northampton, the latter by John Philipot and Nicholas Brembre, but at national crises, as is usual with Englishmen, the opponents worked together. Philipot and Walworth were appointed collectors and administrators of the subsidy of two-tenths granted by Parliament in 1377, with a committee of eight other Londoners to collect the two-fifteenths, much to the disgust of John of Gaunt, who presently contrived to oust both Philipot and Walworth. They had done their duty with the utmost integrity, and their accounts were correct to a farthing. But that did not preserve them from the jealousy of the princes and barons, who were furious at seeing the financial control of the kingdom in the hands of plain merchants.

Philipot soon had different work to do. The entire coast line was being molested by French, Spanish and Scottish squadrons, some national in character, others frankly piratical. One of these latter was harrying the east coast under the command of a Scots adventurer named Mercer. The Royal Council, torn by internal dissension, was helpless, but now London, under Philipot's energetic driving, took up the matter and equipped a squadron of ships. It was Philipot himself who, as already mentioned, took command, destroyed Mercer's fleet and caused the doughty pirate to swing by the neck. The rejoicing and the material gain were great. The nobles of the Council grumbled, but did not suggest how otherwise London should have acted when the official government was so completely at fault. The city showed its appreciation by electing Philipot mayor for the next year.

Exploits such as this did not, unfortunately, do much to balance the general ill-success, especially when the government wasted men and money on a great devastating raid through France in 1380 instead of making a powerful effort to crush the French sea-power. Money was chronically lacking; the pressure of taxation was cruel; and the large class of villeins or serfs, without political rights, subjected by the lords to forced labour, and taxed to the last farthing, were in a state of incipient revolt. Many of the towns were equally disturbed, the body of the populace, like the *plebs* of ancient Rome, being anxious to break the charmed circle of the trading magnates who engrossed the municipal offices.

This was the case in London itself. Other towns were intent on wresting charters of incorporation from the local magnates (generally the abbots of monasteries) who held them in thrall. It only needed a spark to fire this mass of combustible matter and the spark was supplied by the "Poll tax" of 1380-1 imposed to fill the ever-widening deficit in the national budget.

The expedient had already been tried in 1379. In that year the tax was graduated from ten marks on the royal dukes and viscounts, six on earls, bishops and abbots, three on barons, down to a groat (4d.) on all commoners, male and female, over sixteen years of age. The tax of 1380-1 was graduated within much narrower limits—from twenty shillings to a shilling on all adults as before. It was, in fact, "an attempt . . . to relieve the propertied classes at the expense of the peasants and poorer burghers."[1] The latter began by flat misrepresentation of the numbers in each house or village: with the result that it appeared that the adult population of England had diminished from 1,355,000 to 896,000 in one year! The absurdity was too plainly apparent, and the government sent out commissioners

[1] Prof. C. F. Bastable, article, "English Finance," *Ency. Brit.*

to revise the returns and collect the arrears. It was a fatal move; the obvious misrepresentation should have warned them that the opposition was universal and that it would have been better to recognise the fact. Unfortunately the chief royal councillors—Simon of Sudbury, Archbishop of Canterbury, the Chancellor; and Sir Robert Hailes the Treasurer—did not realise this vital fact.

Revolts broke out in many places at once—in the south and east to the accompaniment of killing the commissioners of the tax, burning of memorial rolls and attacks, more or less successful, on unpopular landowners and their agents. The rising in Kent was the strongest and most thoroughly organised: it was led by a mysterious Walter the Tyler, who is said by Froissart to have served as a soldier in France. His chief associate and lieutenant was John Ball, "the Mad Priest of Kent," the author of the famous rhyme—

> "When Adam delved and Eve span
> Who was then the gentleman?"

Burning and pillaging along their line of march, the rebels reached Southwark on June 13, 1381, while the insurgents from Essex made their way to Aldgate. On the appearance of their friends, the lower orders of the city rose "in countless numbers,"[1] led by Walter Sibley and two other aldermen; the gates were opened, and the angry crowds of men from Kent and Essex poured in. Something like order and discipline was kept by the leaders, and no special injury seems to have been done to the city, but the palace of the Savoy in the Strand and the Hospice of St John, both without the gates, were sacked and set on fire—the Savoy as the abode of John of Gaunt, the Hospice because Hailes was a Knight of St John.

The authorities became, as it were, paralysed. The

[1] Letter Book H, folio 133.

young King, with Sudbury and Hailes, was in the Tower, with a considerable garrison of knights and men-at-arms. Sir Robert Knolles, the famous free-lance, was available for service, and a strong force could have been raised in the city, for Walworth the Mayor, Philipot and others, however they might differ on political questions, had no mind to see London sacked. But panic seems to have prevailed. In the city, the desertion of three aldermen and the open revolt of so many craftsmen, had no doubt disorganised everything: it was difficult to know whom to trust. The result was that the rebels did very much as they pleased.

A hurried deliberation was held in the Tower and it was decided that the youthful King should go out to confer next day with the rebels who had returned from their work of devastation to a camp at Mile End. It was hoped that Richard's presence would act as a deterrent upon violence.

On the morrow, therefore, the boy King went forth to face his insurgent subjects, accompanied by an escort of knights, men-at-arms and citizens: the Princess of Wales also went with him in a chariot or "whirlicote."[1] There was a tumultuous conference. Wat the Tyler, in the name of the mob, demanded the immediate abolition of serfdom and feudal services, the removal of all restrictions on freedom of labour and trade and a general amnesty. To all this the young King straightway consented, and ordered that charters should be drawn up to that effect. But while he was conferring with the more reasonable of the insurgents, Wat the Tyler and a band of desperadoes slipped away and "rushed" the Tower, which, with inexplicable carelessness, had been left with an inadequate guard.

[1] Anominal Chronicle of St Mary's, York, *English Hist. Review*, 1898. This and Walsingham are the chief sources for this account of Wat Tyler's rebellion.

Some of the rioters showed a rough good-fellowship: they used little violence towards the actual garrison, merely indulging in horseplay, taking the men by the beard and greeting them as brothers and good comrades. But the leaders were there to drive matters to extremities, and to rough sport succeeded bloodshed in grim earnest. Archbishop Sudbury and Hailes could hope for no mercy, and none was given. When the noise of the rebels' approach was heard they went to the chapel and received the Last Sacrament, nor was the end long delayed. The insurgents burst in, dragged them forth and hacked off their heads on Tower Hill. These ghastly tokens of success were exposed on London Bridge.

This was only the beginning. By now the rebel horde was raging through the city. Richard Lyons, an unpopular merchant and financier, was beheaded in Chepe, with many others. There was a terrible massacre of Flemings in the Vintry, and every man who had a grievance took his revenge. There was hardly a street which was not littered with corpses; in one place lay a ghastly heap of forty headless bodies: while everywhere, both within and without the walls, houses were sacked and burned. In the words of the record in the city archives such "tribulation as this, greater and more horrible than could be believed by those who had not seen it, lasted down to the hour of vespers on the following day which was Sunday the 15th of June."[1]

Richard, riding back to the Tower, found it in the hands of the rebels. He and his retinue, therefore, retreated to the opposite side of the city and took refuge in the Wardrobe, close to Baynard's Castle. After a conference it was decided that, at all costs, another attempt must be made to placate the rebels so that time might be given to organise some kind of

[1] Letter Book H, folio 133.

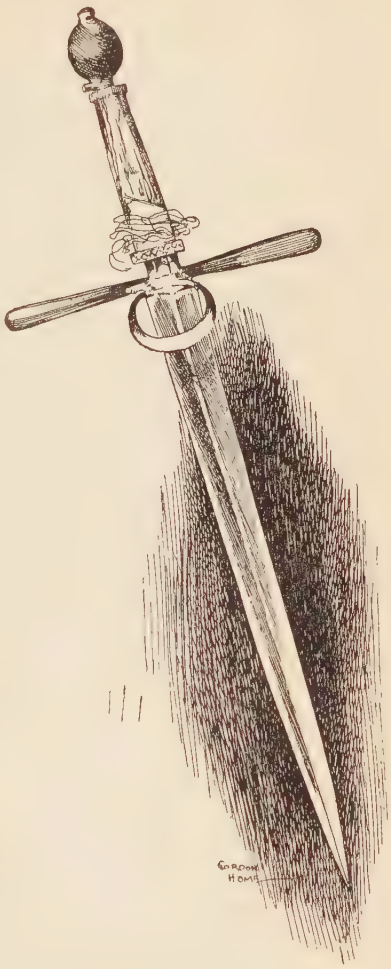
defence. Sir Robert Knolles was entrusted with the duty of collecting the men-at-arms, while Walworth, Philipot and Brembre mustered the city militia. Such preparations as were possible having been hastily set on foot, the young King, with Walworth and a train of nobles, citizens and men-at-arms, rode next morning outside Newgate to Smithfield. What they thought of their chances may be gauged from the fact that Richard and others took the sacrament before starting.

On Smithfield were collected the masses of the rebels. The anonymous chronicle says that they were arrayed in "battailles." William Walworth rode up to them and called for "Wat Tyler of Maidstone." The rebel leader came forth mounted on a pony. At the King's side he dismounted, made a rough obeisance, shook Richard's hand vigorously and greeted him with the words "Be of good cheer, brother." This unconventional welcome preluded a stormy parley, the King asking why the Commons had not departed homeward, since their demands had been granted, while Wat doggedly, and apparently insolently, repeated them. It looks as though he were bent upon forcing an outbreak, for his behaviour was studiously annoying. Complaining that he was thirsty with talking, he called for a "hanape" of water and rinsed his mouth noisily. Next he shouted for and emptied a jug of beer, and mounted his horse to return to his fellows. What his intentions were will never be known, for at this juncture a "valet of Kent" in the King's train called out that he recognised the rebel and that he was the greatest *larone et robbare* in all Kent. Wat heard the remark and truculently shouted to one of his attendants to dismount and behead the valet. Apparently the man hung back, so the doughty and pot-valiant Walter seized his dagger with intent to execute his "Lynch-Law" in person.

Walworth, fearing the consequences for Richard, thrust

himself across his path calling on him to respect the royal presence: but the rebel leader had by this time lost his temper completely and his reply was a stab at the Mayor with his dagger. Walworth, however, wore a mail shirt beneath his gown and took no harm, and, his blood being up, he drew his "basilarde" and attacked "the said Wat," dealing him first a stab in the neck and then a blow on the head. One of the royal household ran out to Walworth's assistance and dealt Wat a mortal thrust with his sword. The frightened horse turned and trotted away, Wat still in the saddle, gasping to his followers to avenge him, till, just as he reached them, he lurched from his seat and fell dying.

There was a yell of rage from the rebel masses, bows were bent, clothyard arrows laid on string, and another minute might have witnessed the end of the reign of Richard II. But at this crisis, the youthful monarch rose to the occasion like his father's son. Cantering up to the surging mob, he called out that he was their



THE BASILARDE OR DAGGER WITH WHICH SIR WILLIAM WALWORTH, MAYOR OF LONDON, SLEW WAT THE TYLER, IN 1381.

It is preserved in the Fishmongers' Hall.

leader and lord, and that they should speak their mind to him. Let them follow him to St John's Fields in Clerkenwell and he would hear them. Without their bold and unscrupulous chief, the insurgents were helpless, and they streamed after the brave boy, of whom many of them must have thought as the son of their beloved "Black Prince." So towards the north rode the dauntless young King with the mass of half-cowed, half-angry, leaderless insurgents at his heels, while Walworth galloped into the city and dashed through the streets shouting to all loyal subjects to take arms and hasten to the rescue of their liege lord.

The Corporation must have worked to good purpose, for a strong force was arrayed almost at once; Sir Robert Knolles had gathered a band of 1000 men-at-arms and, besides this, the better classes of the city were now ready for action. Walworth started them for Clerkenwell, and himself with a small body galloped back to Smithfield.

Wat the Tyler, mortally wounded but not dead, had been carried into St Bartholomew's Hospital adjoining, and Smithfield was still occupied by bands of his men. Walworth and his followers rode through these hesitant bodies, burst into the hospital, carried out Tyler—whether still living is not quite clear—and struck off his head.

Meanwhile Knolles, Philipot and Brembre were already marching out to Clerkenwell, and when Walworth rode on to the field with Tyler's head borne beside him on a lance, the insurgents lost heart. Some of them scattered in flight; others called for mercy, which was granted. Richard forbade his followers to wreak their vengeance on the leaderless mob and directed two knights to conduct the Kentishmen through London across the Bridge on their way home. The danger had passed.

Richard showed his gratitude as became a King. He knighted Walworth on the spot. The gallant Mayor protested that he was only a merchant, but the King put the knightly "basinet" on his head, and dubbed him knight with hearty good-will, swinging his sword with both hands—evidently the heavy blade was too much for the single grasp of a lad of fourteen. With Walworth

MEDIAEVAL ENCAUSTIC FLOOR TILES FOUND IN LONDON.
(*Guildhall Museum.*)

there also received the accolade Philipot, Brembre and Robert Launde. To Walworth was granted a hundred acres of land, and to his subordinates forty each. And then the youthful monarch, victorious but weary, rode back to the Wardrobe to be rejoiced over by his mother and ease him of his "grand trayvayle."

One of the last acts of Walworth's stormy mayoralty was to try "Jack Straw," the leader of the rebels from Essex.[1] The wretched man was induced to make a

[1] Walsingham, II. 9, 10, 13.

confession, not by a promise of life, but by one of masses for his soul after execution! He said, whether truthfully or not cannot be ascertained, that the intentions of the extremists were to get possession of the young King and use him as an instrument to attract adherents, but ultimately to kill him, together with all nobles, officials and persons of the upper classes, also, as it seems, all monks except the mendicant friars. Wat the Tyler himself intended to be King of Kent: the other insurgent chiefs were to be kings of their respective counties. The story sounds wild enough, but there may have been truth in it; for Wat's behaviour at Smithfield lends colour to his accomplice's statement. Jack Straw's head soon figured beside Tyler's on London Bridge.

An interesting little sequel to the suppression of the revolt was the granting by the Corporation to Sir Robert Knolles, "our dear and well beloved fellow citizen," permission to build a "hautpas," or elevated hall, as a comfortable addition to his house near All Hallows, Barking. Such special features to a dwelling paid an additional rent or tax; but Sir Robert's yearly fee was to be a red rose presented on Midsummer Day.[1] Doubtless the favour was in acknowledgment of the famous soldier's services in organising the city's forces at the crisis, and the incident forms a pleasant and picturesque interlude in that tumultuous year. The stout warrior was not young, as age went in those days, but he lived to enjoy his "hautpas" and present his fragrant rent for twenty-five years and more, dying in 1407 at the age of at least eighty years.

Walworth's successor was John de Northampton, of the Lancastrian party, who held office for two years in succession. The city was in an extremely troubled condition and the Mayor only consented to a second term of office at the King's express desire. Northampton

[1] Letter Book H, folio 138.

was not popular, but he was a man of strong character,[1] and his mayoralty was marked by a vigorous attempt to put the city's house in order. The excessive fees demanded by the clergy for their religious offices were sternly cut down :[2] and a crusade was carried on against immorality. Felons were hunted down,[3] prostitutes were carted through the streets with their hair cut short and exposed in the pillory. These attempts at internal reform need not, however, be attributed entirely to the Mayor, though doubtless his influence counted for something. His term of office was throughout disturbed ; the elections of mayors during this period were often disorderly ; it is said that Sir Nicholas Brembre, who succeeded John of Northampton in 1383, obtained his position by force rather than the suffrage of the citizens.[4]

In any case, Northampton seems to have raised disturbances, and in January 1384 he was imprisoned in Corfe Castle.[5] It would seem that he was something of a firebrand, for a general assembly decided unanimously that his return would not be to the advantage of London. He was tried before the King at Reading, Brembre and a number of leading Londoners being present, and condemned to imprisonment for life.[6] His escape from death was a narrow one, for he was foolish enough to appeal for delay because his friend John of Gaunt was absent. Richard lost his temper at this ill-omened suggestion, and the ex-Mayor would have been executed then and there but for the intervention of the Queen.[7]

Brembre was re-elected next year, by force, said his

[1] Walsingham, II. 65.
[2] Letter Book H, folio 144.
[3] *Ibid.*, folio 146 b.
[4] *Ibid.*, folio 168 ; Rot. Parl., III. 225.
[5] Letter Book H, folio 173 b.
[6] *Ibid.*, folios 179 and 179 b. ; Walsingham, II. 116.
[7] R. Higden, *Polychronicon* (Rolls, No. 41), IX. 45 *sqq.*

enemies. He is said to have concealed a band of armed men near the Guildhall, and when he found that the voting was going in favour of Nicholas Twyford, to have signalled to them to chase away the latter's supporters.[1]

Altogether Brembre was elected Mayor (fairly or otherwise) four years in succession. During his last term, John of Gaunt and his friends made an effort to obtain the release of John of Northampton but without success:[2] the citizens again resolved that his presence would be a danger to the city. A renewed application in 1387 had better results: the ex-Mayor was restored to liberty, although the citizens had endeavoured to prevent it. By citizens should, perhaps, be understood Brembre and his friends, who seem to have manipulated affairs very much in their own interests.

A far worse fate than Northampton's was to befall Brembre, for in 1388 he was seized and executed by the King's uncle Thomas, Duke of Gloucester, who had raised a revolt against his nephew. There was no very solid reason for the rebellion except wounded vanity. Richard was tactless and extravagant, but not tyrannical. His uncles, however, disliked being ignored for personal friends, such as Robert de Vere, Earl of Oxford, and men of business of the type of Michael de la Pole, the descendant of a wealthy commercial family of Kingston-upon-Hull.[3]

John of Gaunt was absent in Spain, fighting for the throne of Castile, so Duke Thomas took the lead, scattered the King's followers, and took him prisoner. De Vere and de la Pole escaped; but the Parliament called by the rebel lords—known as the Wonderful Parliament—took a bloody vengeance on all of Richard's adherents whom they could seize. One of the victims

[1] Higden, IX. 50-51.
[2] Letter Book H, folio 198 b.
[3] Now Hull.

was Brembre, who, after a scandalously unfair trial, was hanged at Tyburn under very cruel circumstances, for the rope was tightened at the very moment when he was begging John of Northampton's son to forgive him for the injuries which he had done his father. Some of the charges brought against him may have been true, but others were childish: one of them was that he had plotted a massacre of all his municipal opponents; another that he had designed the changing of the name of London to "Little Troy."[1]

King Richard recovered his independence before a twelvemonth was out, and ruled for eight years with much prudence, with the steady support of John of Gaunt, William of Wykeham, and other experienced officials. Peace was made with France and Scotland, and the King's policy seemed entirely directed towards pacific reorganisation. It has always been considered, however, that he was merely biding his time to take vengence upon his oppressors of 1388.

Shortly after Richard had triumphed over his factious uncle there was a quaint and picturesque scene in London. On April 23, 1390 (St George's Day), a joust took place on the Bridge between John de Welles, who had acted as envoy to Scotland to arrange a truce, and Sir David Lindsay of Glenesk, afterwards first Earl of Crawfurd. At a banquet at the Scottish court the two were discussing the aged theme of the relative courage of Englishman and Scotsman. John de Welles proposed that they should decide the point by a friendly joust, instead of arguing *ad infinitum*. Lindsay eagerly assented and, since Welles had to return to London, it was agreed that the joust should take place there. Welles went home and procured for his friendly enemy a safe conduct[2]

[1] Higden, IX. 168; Howell's *State Trials*, I. 118-9; Walsingham, II. 165-74.

[2] *Rotuli Scotiae*, Vol. II. p. 103.

for himself and his train of twenty-eight persons, and apparently twelve other knights with their squires, valets and pages. The safe conduct was available for two months.

The account of the passage of arms given by Hector Boece may perhaps be accepted as more or less correct, though he possibly exaggerated the courtesy of his hero. How the joust was carried out on the bridge is not easy to understand: the most reasonable explanation is that it took place in the rather wider space near the centre. King Richard himself presided, and, no doubt, there was a brave show of gaudy decorations and many-coloured attire. The contest being a more or less friendly one, the spears were blunt. At the sound of the trumpets the two champions hurled themselves at each other, and either splintered his lance without effect in dismounting his adversary. Welles had directed his spear at his opponent's head and hit him fairly on the visor, but the Scottish champion kept his seat so steadily that some of the spectators, quite in the spirit of the modern football "backers," shouted out that Lindsay had strapped himself to his saddle. Thereupon the gallant Scot "proved his honesty" by vaulting to the ground and on to his horse's back again in his heavy armour. A second course followed with equal fortune, but at the third Welles was fairly overthrown. The victor at once dismounted, and in the best spirit went to assist his fallen opponent. Boece adds that he never failed to call daily upon him during such time as he was confined to bed by his bruises and the severe shock of the fall. "There was not," he says proudly, "one single person of nobility who was not well affected towards him," and the evidence is entirely in support of his statement. Lindsay's safe conduct was again and again renewed to extend his stay, and the King in one declares that he is graciously inclined to his guest. The whole incident

THE BEAUTIFUL FIFTEENTH CENTURY FAÇADE OF THE GUILDHALL.

The upper portion of the entrance and of the great hall were rebuilt by Wren after the Fire. The six statues in niches are illustrated on another page.

(*From a drawing made before the 18th century façade was built.*)

THE VICTORIOUS HENRY OF LANCASTER (HENRY IV.) HANDING OVER TO THE CITIZENS OF LONDON HIS DEPOSED COUSIN, RICHARD II.

One of the foremost figures on the left may represent Mayor Drew Barentyne.

(*Harleian MSS.*, 1319. *British Museum.*)

was creditable to all concerned, except, perhaps, the ill-conditioned "backers" who fancied that the Scottish knight did not fight fairly.

Less than two years after this picturesque incident King Richard contrived to quarrel with London. First, he tried to raise a loan in the city on the security of a valuable jewel. The Corporation declined to accommodate him on the ground that so many foreigners had been allowed to settle among them that they were impoverished.[1] This naturally offended Richard. Next he issued a writ commanding every burgess who possessed property to the value of £40 of land or rent to take up the honour of knighthood.[2] Most probably it was a device for raising money by fining the unwilling, and the citizens evaded the demand. Therefore in July, Richard imprisoned the Mayor, John Hende, and the Sheriffs, appointed as Warden Sir Edward Dalyngryge, the builder of beautiful Bodiam Castle in Sussex, and fined the city £100,000.[3] But the royal anger was as fleeting as it was furious. Queen Anne interceded for London, and two months afterwards the fine was remitted, the city's liberties restored and the Mayor and Sheriffs released. But Richard had lost the regard of London, and when, in 1399, his banished cousin, Henry of Lancaster, landed at Ravenspur the city welcomed him heartily.

During the latter part of Richard's reign, London was still troubled by internal dissensions. Many pages of the Letter Books deal with the indictment and punishment of persons for insulting and slandering aldermen and other magnates. In 1391, the Mayor, Adam Bamme, thought it necessary to issue a proclamation on the subject of the factious disputing rife in London

[1] Higden, IX. 270; Walsingham, II. 208.
[2] Letter Book H, folio 259.
[3] *Chron. of Lond.*, Kingsford, p. 17, and Higden, IX. 274.

"to the great peril of all the city and may be of all the realm, to the displeasure also of God and of every good man."[1] The proclamation makes it plain that the dissension was between the parties of Brembre and John of Northampton: it sets forth that there must be an end to the angry bickering. Every one is to keep silence on the vexed subject on pain of a year's imprisonment!

Mayor Bamme died in his second term of office in June 1397. As interim-Mayor, until the election in October, the King appointed "our well-beloved Richard Whityngtone, in whose fidelity and circumspection we do repose full confidence."[2] It was apparently an arbitrary exercise of power, but it is clear that the appointment was entirely acceptable to the citizens, for in October Whittington was unanimously elected for the ensuing year. It is likely enough that he was chosen as a quiet non-party man of the highest character, devoted to the interests of the city. He was followed in 1398 by Drew Barentyn, in whose term occurred the headlong fall and deposition of Richard II. The extent to which the rash young monarch had forfeited the affection of the city is evident. Barentyn and five hundred principal citizens rode out to meet Henry of Lancaster and the city raised for him a force of twelve hundred well-armed horsemen.[3]

Froissart goes so far as to say that the enmity of London was the chief factor in Richard's downfall. He says that Henry enforced his surrender at Flint Castle by telling him that the grim-looking men-at-arms and archers ranged under the walls were Londoners.

During the later years of Edward III. and the reign of Richard II., there lived in London a man, poor and unknown, whose influence in after ages counted for more than that of the pompous, richly-attired magnates and

[1] Letter Book H, folio 259.
[2] *Ibid.*, folio 314.
[3] Froissart, chaps. cix. and cx.

ladies whom, as he says, he was loath to reverence—William Langland, the poet, the author of those "Visions," which throw so much light upon the lower strata of English society during the Middle Ages. The personality of this poetic antitype of Chaucer is as elusive as that of Shakespeare. It is actually not certain that his patronymic was Langland, although there is no doubt that his Christian name was the same as that of England's greatest dramatist. He was born about 1332, probably at Cleobury Mortimer in Shropshire (he refers more than once to the Malvern Hills): and somewhere about 1365 came to London, where, so far as is known, he resided in Cornhill until his death about 1400, increasing his livelihood by drafting and copying legal documents, his incisive, satirical poems—*The Vision of Piers Plowman* and the rest—being the fruit of his leisure hours.

There are many personal allusions in his verses which enable one to obtain a glimpse of the poet. He was familiarly called "Long Will," doubtless on account of his tall stature, and describes himself as clothed like a "lollere" (in a long black gown), but not by any means a Lollard—he was no respecter of persons or sects in his poems, and attacked with special bitterness the clergy. He was himself in minor orders, and eked out his livelihood by performing clerical duties, but he was not a monk, for he had taken a wife: consequently he could not obtain any preference, and this consideration may have added to the bitterness which pervades his verse: one looks in vain for a little of Chaucer's frank *joie de vivre*: his general themes are the misery of the poor and the corruption of the nobles and clergy. His moodiness; his bursts of scorn; his denunciations of the world about him caused "Long Will" sometimes to be spoken of as a madman. Doubtless his satirical tongue made him enemies: he says once, "Ich made of the men as reson me tauhte"—in other words he used the doings of his

neighbours as a text for his poetic sermons. Yet life had its compensations one imagines: there is a sort of half-ashamed allusion to domestic happiness in the lines.

> ". . . whanne Ich wonede on Cornehulle
> Kytte and ich in a cote."

Perhaps his wife "Kytte" had the gift of bringing a smile now and then to the saturnine face; and the daughter Kalote (? Charlotte) may have done her part. But the allusions to his domestic life are few and apparently "long Will" was not formed by nature to be a happy man. However that may be, in London he made his home for many years: one would like to know what he was doing when the mob burnt John of Gaunt's palace and when Wat the Tyler's rebels came tramping through the streets.

CHAPTER VII

THE GREATEST PERIOD OF MEDIAEVAL LONDON

1399 TO 1422

LONDON'S history begins a new phase with the accession of Henry IV. During the preceding two centuries the city has frequently been seen in collision with the sovereign and often subjected to arbitrary acts of royal power, of which the latest was that of Richard II. in 1392. But Henry IV., elevated to the throne by a military revolution and surrounded by enemies within and without his kingdom, had not this power, even had he the will to interfere with the jealously-preserved liberties of the great and wealthy city, every day growing more and more conscious of its strength.

At first London seems to have been by no means confident of the new king's ability to maintain himself, for it was decidedly sparing of its cash. Henry's first appeal for pecuniary aid produced no more than 4000 marks. As his position became more secure, the citizens opened their purses more widely: in 1409, when Richard Merlawe was mayor, they made an advance of 7000 and three years later one of 10,000 marks. The mayor in this latter year was Robert Chichele, brother of Henry Chichele, afterwards Archbishop of Canterbury—so closely were the citizens of London connected with the greatest dignitaries of the realm.

The most notable name, however, possessed by London during this period is that of Richard Whytyngtone,[1] the "Dick Whittington" of the famous legend. Indeed much more is popularly known of the legendary Whittington than the Whittington of history. One would have to travel far in England to find a child who

[1] The spelling of his name is rich in its variations, but the most familiar form is adhered to onwards.

had not heard of Dick Whittington and his Cat, but what amount of truth there may be in the story it is not easy to determine. The famous Mayor, whose charitable institutions survive to this day,[1] is held to have been the third son of Sir William Whittington of Pauntley in Gloucestershire and his wife Joan de Berkeley. The marriage took place after 1355, consequently Richard, as the third son, cannot have been born before 1358-9. Yet in 1379, when only twenty or twenty-one years of age, he appears in a list of wealthy citizens as subscribing five marks to a civic loan. In 1393 he was Alderman of Broad Street Ward and served as Sheriff. Three years later Richard Whittington, citizen and mercer, became mayor, as related in the preceding chapter.

It will at once be seen that there is indirect evidence of something beyond the ordinary in this famous mayor's early life. At the age of twenty-one, at most, he was wealthy enough to be counted among the principal citizens of London and to subscribe a sum equal to at least £40 in modern gold value. It may be that he was abundantly provided with capital by his wealthy relations—it is, in any case, clear that there is something to explain concerning his very early appearance as a man of wealth and standing. One is obliged to admit that his affluence, when only lately out of his apprenticeship, may well have been due to some lucky speculation or windfall—in short, that there may be a solid kernel of fact embedded in the story of Richard Whittington's fortune-bringing cat.

It is commonly held that the legend is no earlier in origin than the seventeenth century, but it can actually be traced back to the time of Whittington himself. In 1460 his great-nephew, Richard, built himself a house in Gloucester. Four centuries later the ruins of this house

[1] The Almshouses are now at Highgate as mentioned later.

were unearthed during the construction of the city's drainage system, and among them was found a bas-relief of a young boy with a cat in his arms. Westmacott the sculptor, Mr Franks, Director of the Society of Antiquaries, and Mr Albert Way, F.S.A., unanimously decided that it was a work of the fifteenth century—almost certainly set up by Whittington's great-nephew.[1] There is thus some evidence in favour of the belief that in one way or another a cat was associated with the family. How or why it is as yet impossible to state. Very probably the great Mayor belonged to the Ancient and Honourable Order of the Men Who Stroke Cats: and some superstitious servant or friend may have adopted and spread the view that his success in business was due to the occult influence of his favourite puss. Whittington himself may have believed as much. It was a superstitious age, and superstition is by no means extinct in twentieth-century England. It is quite easy to understand how the legend would grow up, if merchants became

SCULPTURED BAS-RELIEF FOUND AT GLOUCESTER IN THE RUINS OF THE HOUSE OF WHITTINGTON'S GREAT-NEPHEW.

The figure of a boy with a cat in his arms is remarkable evidence in favour of the popular story.

(*Gloucester Museum.*)

[1] H. Fox Bourne, *English Merchants*, Vol. I. p. 76, note.

accustomed to seeing their associate discussing business or the city's policy with a pet cat curled up on his knees or purring round his legs. In any case, the archæological discovery at Gloucester affords testimony of an interesting if not quite decisive character: in short, a cat may have played some part in the life of perhaps the most famous of all the magnates of London.

The legend also preserved the name of Whittington's wife. She was Alice Fitz-waryn, daughter of Sir Ivo Fitz-waryn of Torrington in Devon, a man of wide estates in several counties. It may be that some of Whittington's early success was due to financial support from his wealthy father-in-law.

The real Whittington, from all that is known of him, seems to have been very much as the popular story describes him, *i.e.*, the perfect citizen and merchant—shrewd, enterprising, upright, kindly, and public-spirited, who made a huge fortune and expended it royally. Towards the close of his life he sat in Parliament, but his interest certainly did not lie in politics, although he was ready to serve his fellow-citizens in the national council if necessary.

Like his associates, Whittington was a banker as well as a trader, and prominent among his clients were two kings, Henry IV. and his greater son. On several occasions he advanced to them sums ranging from £700 to £6400; and apparently Henry IV. relied upon him for money for temporary and immediate purposes, apart from what may be called Government loans. In return, his royal master put profitable business in his way: such items as the supplying, in 1401, of the costly stuffs for the wedding of Princess Blanche with Louis, son of Rupert, the King of the Romans, and, five years later, the same for the marriage of Princess Philippa. Henry V. entrusted Whittington with the business of superintending the expenditure involved in the completion of

G.H.

THE GATEWAY OF THE BLOODY TOWER IN THE TOWER OF LONDON (built in the 13th century)

Through the arch beneath the teeth of the portcullis is visible a portion of the Traitors' Gate giving access to the Thames.

G.H.

A WINDOW ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF THE GREAT HALL OF THE GUILDHALL.

This window in the beautifully arcaded walls is unchanged since the time of Whittington.

Westminster Abbey. Everything tends to show that his reputation as a merchant prince and a man of integrity was of the highest.

But Whittington's heart seems always to have been with London and his charities. If Dugdale, who may well have had the best authority for his statement, is to be trusted, his rule in life was to signalise it by "deeds of mercy and pity, and specially to provide for those miserable persons whom the penury of poverty insulteth, and to whom the power of seeking the necessities of life by art or bodily labour is interdicted."[1] His private charity is reputed to have been enormous, and there is no reason not to believe this. Of his public benefactions the most famous was the rebuilding of the church of St Michael Paternoster "in the Royall" and the building and endowment of the college and hospital (properly almshouse) connected with it. The college, of course, disappeared at the Reformation, but the almshouses are still maintained at Highgate by the Worshipful Company of Mercers.

Stow notes several smaller instances of Whittington's public spirit. By his will he left bequests for the rebuilding of Rahere's Hospital of St Bartholomew, for paving and glazing the new Guildhall, and for building the library there. In education it is clear that he was deeply interested: he bore nearly the entire cost of building the Greyfriars Library and spent in stocking it no less than £400 (roughly £5000 in gold value).

Another light is thrown on the great mayor's character by his crusade against the brewers of London for "forestalling" (*i.e.* "cornering") provisions and adulterating ale, "for which . . . the brewers were very wroth."[2]

Whittington's liberality was not confined to London: he is said to have contributed much to charities and public works in the West of England, and among these

[1] Dugdale, *Monasticon*, VI. 739. [2] Cotton MS., *Galba*, B. 5.

one finds Gloucester Cathedral. There is no evidence as to when he was knighted: some writers doubt if he ever were Sir Richard, because Stow does not so call him. That a knighthood was conferred seems to be extremely uncertain: the Mercer's Company is not possessed of any record on the point: if conferred, it must have been at the very end of his life.

There is a story that he entertained King Henry V. and his newly wedded wife, Catherine of France, at a banquet at the Guildhall. In the centre of the hall was a fire of fragrant wood and spices—a very costly feature. The King alluded to the expensive novelty, whereat Whittington bowed and, producing from a chest the royal bonds for loans to the value of £60,000, advanced by the Mayor and his business associates, he tossed them into the blaze, thereby cancelling the whole mass of transactions. "Never had prince such a subject as you!" cried Henry as he realised the liberality of his Mayor of London; to which the courtly Whittington replied, "Never had subject such a prince!" Unfortunately one can find no reliable basis for the story.

One of his last works during his life, and not the least worthy one, was the rebuilding of Newgate prison, which had hitherto been a pestilential den, in which the prisoners died like flies. The work was unfinished when Whittington died, but he left money by will for its completion. As a prison reformer—a very unusual apparition in the Middle Ages—the famous Mayor set the coping stone upon his reputation for beneficence. He died childless on March 24, 1423, taken away betimes from the wrath to come, leaving the whole of his fortune for charitable purposes under the administration of his friend John Carpenter, the celebrated City Clerk, after whom streets are named to-day, and Alderman John Coventry. He was buried in the Church of St Michael Paternoster, but both church and tomb were destroyed

in the frightful holocaust of 1666, so that Richard Whittington's monuments to-day are not to be found in graven stone, but in his charities and the imperishable

THE BRASS TO THE MEMORY OF WILLIAM TONGE IN ALL HALLOWS CHURCH, BARKING (BY-THE-TOWER).

"Pray for the soul of William Tonge who lies here
may God have mercy on his soul."

His will is dated 1389, and the brass may be only a few years later. It is one of the earliest surviving of such memorials in the City of London.

(*From a rubbing by Gordon Home.*)

reputation for nobility of character, written indelibly on the records of the city which he so truly loved.

Although the most famous of London's merchant princes, Whittington was not the only one and not all through his life the most wealthy. In 1406 one hears of

John Norbury and John Hende as lending £2000 each to the King as against Whittington's £1000. John Hende, Citizen and Draper, was the Mayor who, in 1391, fell foul of the unstable Richard II. He was Mayor again in 1404 and among his benefactions to the city was the rebuilding of St Swithun's Church. Another famous figure in the London of that age was William Sevenoke, Mayor in 1418, the founder of a free school and almshouse at his native town. These men are typical of many of the city's successful merchants, prosperous business men who made large fortunes and spent them liberally.

The reign of Henry IV. was a troubled one; but the disorders of the time did not directly touch London, although, as already noted, they induced repeated demands for money. An interesting episode at the very commencement of the reign of Henry IV. was the visit to London of Manuel Palaeologos, Emperor of Constantinople. The once mighty capital of the Roman Empire was now no more than that of a dwindling and poverty-stricken realm, cowering beneath the fear of the Osmanli Turks, and often forced to pay tribute for permission to prolong its wretched existence. Manuel was perhaps the best of its last line of Christian rulers, but he was helpless for lack of money and men, and, to obtain them, was forced to make a kind of begging tour in Western Europe. He reached England in 1399, and was accorded a stately reception by the city. His visit was so far successful that the King subscribed £2000 to the Byzantine Defence Fund, and Manuel may have collected more privately. Still, the money would have been of small avail but for the crushing defeat inflicted on the Turkish Sultan Bayezid I. at Angora in 1402 by Timur the Lame ("Tamerlane"). It gave a respite to the remnant of the Greek Empire, and Manuel died on his uneasy throne a quarter of a century later.

Early next year (1400) came more serious affairs than pageantry, when various friends of Richard II. rose in revolt. Their plan was to seize London, but the city was fully prepared, and the citizens turned out in such force that the rebel lords abandoned their attempt and fled to the west to be, for the most part, taken and slain at Cirencester and elsewhere.

In these years London came face to face with that which hitherto it had not seen—religious persecution. The existence of Lollardy was a source of fear to the clergy, and Pope Boniface IX. had, in 1395, written to the Mayor and Corporation requesting them to use their influence with the King to destroy this *lolium aridum*. Henry IV., a strictly orthodox churchman, and closely connected with the hierarchy, soon acquiesced in the wishes of his ecclesiastical friends and, in 1401, the grim statute *de haeretico comburendo* was passed. It was the first law enacted in England for the suppression of religious opinion.

During the next twenty years there were several victims, the first being Sir William Sautry, who was "degradyd off his preesthode" and burnt in Smithfield before the passing of the act. A more worthy martyr than Sautry, who seems to have professed and recanted more than once, was John Badby, who was burned in 1410. The Prince of Wales, afterwards Henry V., played a part in the tragedy. He first did his best to induce the "ffals Loller and an herytyke"[1] to recant his errors—as the Prince deemed them. He was unsuccessful, and fire was set to the pile in Smithfield, but Henry stood by watching with earnest zeal for some sign of repentance. The victim groaned and cried with the torture, and, believing that he realised his error, the Prince ordered the faggots to be pulled away. But Badby was resolute, and the execution was completed.

[1] *Chron. London*, Ed. Kingsford, pp. 63 and 68.

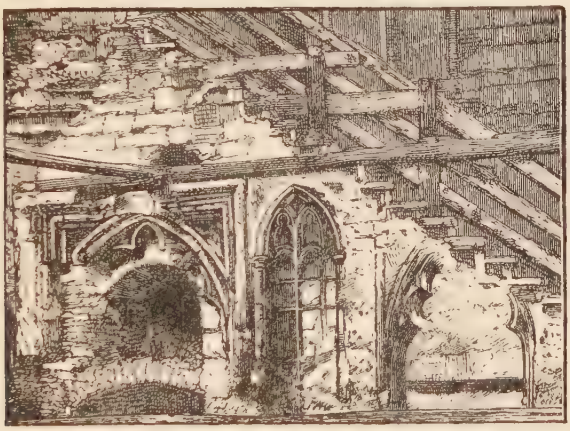
The internal history of London during the reign of Henry IV. seems to have been comparatively tranquil, though at elections of Mayors and Sheriffs feeling often ran high, so that in 1404 a regulation was made, excluding from the Guildhall at such times apprentices, serving men, and others not belonging to the Freedom of the city, who were wont to attend in numbers and yell their preferences "to the manifest troubling and disturbance" of the dignitaries.[1] Next year there appeared an order from the Mayor concerning the due keeping of the peace in the city at Christmas: every home was to hang a lighted lantern at the door.[2]

In 1406 there were some curious cases in the Mayoral Court. One was that of a man convicted of burglary from the house of Margaret Normantone, the widow of a grocer. He was sentenced to be hanged, but pleaded "benefit of clergy." Therefore he was remanded to gaol for enquiry. What happened to him is unfortunately not disclosed. One of the first cases which came before Whittington in his third mayoralty was a peculiarly unpleasant one—that of a tailor who had connived at the adultery of his wife with a chaplain for the miserable bribe of 3s. 4d.! The wretched tailor was exposed in the pillory but, as usual, one hears nothing of any punishment inflicted on the priest.

Incidentally Whittington's third election to the mayoral chair in 1406 seems to have been the occasion of more than usual solemnity: there is a curious religious tone in the official account of the proceedings. A solemn Mass with music was celebrated in the Chapel of the Guildhall and then, "without any clamour or discussion" the Commoners "peacefully and amicably"[3] nominated Richard Whytyngtone, mercer, and Drew Barentyne, goldsmith, as candidates. It seems that lots were cast to decide which should be selected, after which

[1] Letter Book I, folio 33. [2] *Ibid.*, folio 47. [3] *Ibid.*, folio 54.

"the Mayor and Aldermen coming down from the Chamber into the Hall . . . notified by the Recorder . . . how that, by Divine inspiration the lot had fallen upon the said Richard Whytyngton." At the end of the proceedings, the Commoners made their plea that at all future elections Mass should be celebrated. The



Surviving Features of the Guildhall Chapel.

plea was granted, and it was directed that the same Mass was "to be solemnly chaunted by the priest singers in the Chapel aforesaid, and upon that Feast" (St Edward's Day, Oct. 13).

Drew[1] Barentyne was Mayor in 1408-9: his year of office was marked by a curious act of insubordination by William Kyngscote, the Warden of Ludgate, who not only refused to deliver to the new Sheriffs the prisoners in his charge, but forcibly resisted their entrance, with

[1] This mayor's Christian name was Drew, as he most clearly states in his petition, but in the *Chronicles of London*, I, Julius, B. II, folio 64, he is given as Drugo. As he was a Channel Islander, it may be assumed that Drew was derived from the well-known Frankish name Drogo.

"swords, baselards and other arms," likewise pelting them with stones from the battlements! The reason for this violent outbreak does not appear. Kyngscote made no defence before the Mayoral Court, but humbly put himself upon the favour of the Court and of the said Sheriffs. He was discharged from his office, sentenced to a year's imprisonment in Newgate and incapacitated from holding any office. The imprisonment was, however, remitted at the request of the insulted Sheriffs and, strangely enough, two years later, Kyngscote was readmitted to the right of holding office.[1]

In 1410, the new Guildhall, much of which is incorporated in the existing building, was commenced. The work continued for three years, the necessary funds being provided by bequests by will and by subscriptions of wealthy citizens. These sources of supply had, however, dried up by 1413 and the work threatened to come to a standstill. Consequently, on March 14, a council was held and additional fees were imposed upon apprenticeships, deeds, wills and letters-patent. The proceeds of all fines were also devoted to the "New Work" and a levy of 100 marks a year was made upon the revenues of London Bridge—that consistently prosperous institution![2]

Henry IV., having overcome all his difficulties by dint of courage and craft, passed away on March 20, 1413, at Westminster, in the chamber called Jerusalem, where it had been predicted that he would die. It was known or surmised that the energetic Henry V. was bent on war with France, but before he could enter upon his ambitious scheme he had to deal with grave internal disturbances. The Lollards were still active, despite the persecutions of the reign just concluded, and they had an influential leader in the person of Sir John Oldcastle, Baron of Cobham by right of his wife. He was arraigned as a

[1] Letter Book I, folio 83. [2] *Ibid.*, folio 121.

Aaron?

Moses?

Discipline.

Justice.

Fortitude.

Temperance.

THE SIX STATUES WHICH OCCUPIED NICHES IN THE FAÇADE OF THE 15TH-CENTURY GUILDHALL.

When the beautiful south side of the building was remodelled in the 18th century, these statues were not retained and have been lost. The suggestions as to their identification are those of the artist who sketched them at the time of the demolition of the porch.

heretic by Archbishop Arundel and condemned, but succeeded in escaping.

The danger roused the Lollards and, according to rumour, they plotted to seize the King and his brothers while passing the New Year (1414) season at Eltham. There was to be a great assembly of the rebels on St Giles's Fields, a mile outside London.[1] No evidence is forthcoming that any violent purpose was in view, but undoubtedly the King believed that there was a plot against him. He ordered the gates to be closed, and surprised the "conspirators" as they were drifting to the place in groups off their guard. Oldcastle was apparently not present, but Sir Roger Acton and thirty-six others, including seven prominent Lollard priests, were captured and put to death.

This danger, if danger it were, being disposed of, Henry could go forward with his scheme of conquest in France. Money was needed and, of course, wealthy London was called upon. On March 14, 1414, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Henry Beaufort, Bishop of Winchester, the King's uncle, and various royal princes and peers, met the Mayor and Corporation at the Guildhall to discuss ways and means. One reads with some amusement that on assembling "diligent council" was held as to how they should sit. It would appear that the Princes of the Church and State were disposed to stand upon their dignity, but that the Mayor insisted upon his right to take the chief place as representative in the city of "our most excellent Lord the King." The pecuniary result of the discussion is not recorded, but it is known that London made considerable advances to Henry, over and above those made by individual citizens. On June 16, the city loaned 10,000 marks on

[1] Walsingham, II. 292-9; *London Chron.*, Julius, Kingsford, p. 69. The Parish Church of St Giles is between Shaftesbury Avenue and the eastern end of New Oxford Street.

the security of a collar of gold and gems;[1] it was, perhaps, one of the gorgeous trinkets left by the magnificent Richard II. Six weeks later he negotiated a second loan for the same amount, on the security of the customs.[2] Then Henry departed to commence victoriously a most devastating and disastrous war, which was to continue for forty years and which was forced upon a neighbour who was most anxious to avoid it.

According to Alderman Gregory, the King took leave of the city authorities on June 15. He bade them keep his "chamber" for him when he went abroad, and wished them farewell with the solemn words "Christ save London!"[3] It was not, however, until August 12 that he embarked at Southampton for France. At the end of September came a royal letter to London announcing the taking of Harfleur. Then followed a month of suspense until, on October 25, the whole city was cast into gloom by an apparently authentic report that disaster had befallen the King and his army in France. There was universal mourning, which was turned into wild rejoicing when, on the 28th, just as the citizens were proceeding to the Guildhall to elect the Mayor for the coming year, there arrived a despatch announcing the tremendous victory of Agincourt. In their joy, it was resolved that the Mayor's procession to Westminster should, on this occasion, be made on foot as a token of gratitude to the Giver of Victories.[4]

The triumphant return of the King was made by "Royall London" the occasion of enthusiastic rejoicing. Walsingham says that the preparation was on a scale unparalleled[5] and that a special treatise would be necessary to do justice to the variety and ingenuity of the spectacles and the lavish expenditure upon them.

[1] Letter Book I, folio 1586.
[2] *Ibid.*, folio 157.
[3] Gregory's *Chronicle* (Camd. Soc., N.S., No. 17), pp. 108-9.
[4] Letter Book I, folio 139.
[5] Walsingham, II. 314.

On Saturday, November 23, 1415, the new Mayor, Nicholas Wotton, with the Sheriffs and Aldermen and all the Companies marshalled in their best array behind their banners, rode forth to meet the conqueror on Blackheath to escort him thence into London. It was an entry such as had not been witnessed since the Black Prince brought home as a captive King John II.[1] Henry brought no king with him, but there rode behind him two Dukes of the blood-royal of France, several nobles of the highest rank and hundreds of scions of almost every noble house in France. So the capital's welcome to its king was one of great emotion. Next morning it sent the royal victor a gift worthy of its fame—£1000 in two bowls of gold valued at £500.

Next year London, for the second time within twenty years, entertained an Emperor, this occasion a more substantial potentate than poor, shadowy Manuel Palaeologos, who was, at this time, however, enjoying a period of comparative prosperity. The guest of 1416 was the Holy Roman Emperor Sigismund, who came to exert his influence to compose the relations between England and France. In the latter country, torn between warring factions, he had little success, but came on to England none the less. He landed at Dover on Monday, May 4, 1416, being attended by a train of one thousand nobles and their followers, whose names, gloriously garbled, are given in the London Chronicles. At Dover he was welcomed by Henry's second brother Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester; at Canterbury by Prince John, Duke of Bedford, and at Dartford by the Duke of Clarence. As he neared London, Henry rode out to meet him and, on Blackheath, he was welcomed by the Mayor and a great train of mounted citizens, who escorted the illustrious visitor through the city to Westminster.

Sigismund stayed at Westminster until the 22nd, when

[1] See pp. 136 and 137.

King and Emperor departed for Windsor. There the latter was solemnly invested with the Order of the Garter ; seemingly the first instance of a foreign monarch being so decorated. From a mediator, Sigismund became a friend and partisan of England, but his power as Emperor was far too small to enable him to influence the struggle with France. He departed after a long stay in great pomp, undoubtedly much pleased with his reception.

During these years, further attempts were made to deal with various moral and hygienic defects of the city. An ordinance was passed to drain Moorfields and lay it out in gardens, thereby removing a pestilential menace to the health of London. This marsh had arisen through the blocking of the passages through the Roman wall of London of the feeders of the Wallbrook.[1]

The use of water from the great conduit in Chepe was regulated. It appeared that the brewers had been drawing more than their share to the detriment of the ordinary citizens.[2] In 1417 an order was issued to abolish the " stews " or brothels in the city, any attempt to set up a new one was to be liable to a fine of £5. The regulation was made, but it is to be feared that its enforcement was lax. There was the curious provision that " every person—for his own seemliness, might lawfully have and make in his own house a stew, or such other becoming thing, to the use of him and his household." [3] The " stew " in this case being apparently a hot or primitive sweating room.

In the same year an end was put to a quaint dispute concerning the precedence of the rectors of the city churches at the Pentecostal procession. The Rectors especially concerned were those of St Peter Cornhill, St Magnus the Martyr and St Nicholas Coleabbey. Every year the sacred ceremony was preceded and followed by

[1] Letter Book I, folio 152. [2] *Ibid.*, folio 154. [3] *Ibid.*, folio 194.

riotous dissensions due, not to the rectors themselves, but to their exuberant parishioners, who did their best to disturb the peace of the city, and satisfy "a lurking malevolence." Evidently there had been some stormy scenes between the enthusiastic journeymen and 'prentice lads who championed the pretensions of their respective ecclesiastical pastors, and the city fathers decided that the scandal must cease. "Wishing to promote that peace and tranquillity which, by the bond of their oath, they are especially bound to watch over in the city aforesaid," they solemnly debated the matter, taking "into diligent consideration the ancient ritual, and the solemn proofs, decrees and sentences," and came to the conclusion that the priority among the churches of London belonged to St Peter's Cornhill, because it had been founded in the year 179 (wrongly written 199) by King Lucius,[1] and had been the Metropolitan Basilica for over four hundred years thereafter. So the dispute was composed, but whether the hot-headed 'prentice lads ceased to "scrap" over the question is quite another matter. One fears not.

Meanwhile King Henry had returned to France, and was busily pursuing his plans of conquest, capturing town after town in Normandy with such steady rapidity that the only fear was that men would be lacking to hold them against a French counter-attack. There is no doubt that the national pride was strongly stirred, and the progress of success was watched with breathless interest in London. In the Letter Books appears a most quaint and fulsomely flattering letter of congratulation from the city to the King.[2]

In July 1418 began the terrible six-months' siege of

[1] Letter Book I, folio 202. There were no kings in Britain in 179, but as this fact has yet to be learnt by many of the present generation the Londoners of the fifteenth century may therefore be excused.

[2] Letter Book I, folio 209.

Rouen, by far the greatest and most arduous military enterprise hitherto attempted by the English. Rouen was probably as large as London, strongly fortified: its garrison was as numerous as the small besieging army and fought to the end with splendid patriotism and bravery. But there was no shaking the grip of the English King. London aided him loyally, collecting reinforcements, subscribing money and forwarding supplies. In the latter were included 30 butts of wine, 200 tuns of ale at 30s. the tun, and 300 of beer at 13s. 4d. The mention here of beer shows that it is inaccurate to suppose that it was not brewed until the reign of Henry VIII. It was evidently much inferior in quality to ale. With the liquor, the indefatigable city sent 2500 wooden cups made by the turners at the rate of 4s. per 100, or about ½d. each, *e.g.* half a silver penny.[1]

Meanwhile the gallant defenders of Rouen received neither men nor food from the wretched French Government. The horrors of the siege were unspeakable: the English King relied upon the slow process of starvation, and, at last, in January 1419, the great city fell. Henry's terms were harsh enough: the unhappy citizens had to pay a ransom of 300,000 crowns. No one who would not take the oath of allegiance to England was permitted to remain. Alain Blanchard, a popular leader who had done much to inspire the desperate defence, was ruthlessly put to death.

The fall of Rouen was a terrible blow to faction-ridden France, but it need not have had any great result but for those factions and their virulent hostility. The conquest of Normandy was completed during the year, but the expenses of the war must have been felt as very heavy, and possibly public opinion would have enforced

[1] *Journal*, I, folio 48. *Not* 25,000 as stated by Besant and R. R. Sharpe, *London and the Kingdom*, Vol. I. p. 264. The strength of the English Army was not much over 12,000.

a peace when, suddenly, the madness of the Dauphinois (or Armagnac) party threw the game into Henry's hands. The Duke of Burgundy was foully murdered at Montereau by the adherents of the Dauphin; and his son, at once, wild for revenge, made overtures to the English King. He had with him all the royal family of France except the Dauphin himself: the King, an imbecile, and the evil Queen Isabeau were easily induced to disinherit their eldest son and recognise Henry as heir to the French throne. He was to marry the French monarch's eldest daughter Katharine. The treaty was signed at Troyes on May 20, 1420; on June 3 the marriage took place, and eleven days later, the great event was celebrated in London by a solemn procession, ending in a religious service in St Paul's.[1]

Early next year it was made known to the public that Henry was bringing his new wife to be crowned Queen of England in Lent. The royal pair landed at Dover and entered London in great state on St Valentine's Day. A week later Katharine was crowned at Westminster. The whole city turned out for the great occasion, and the coronation procession was escorted by the Companies in resplendent livery, mounted on horseback, and by bands of citizens marching on foot. Truly these were years of colour and pageantry at their apogee!

That was the great King's last day of triumph in the city which was his pillar and strong stay. Six months later he departed again for vexed France and never returned. On August 31 next year he died at Vincennes. His body was borne through France to Calais, shipped to Dover and brought thence to London, which came forth in its thousands to render the last honours to the mighty dead,[2] "off whose Soulle Jhesu have mercy."

The streets had been carefully cleansed. At St

[1] Walsingham, II. 335.

[2] *London Chron.*, ed. Kingsford, 74.

George's Church in Southwark, the mournful cortège was met by the Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen and the principal citizens, all clad in white gowns and hoods. Through Southwark, across the Bridge, through the narrow streets, overhung by tall gabled dwellings, crowded with silent spectators, the cortège moved on to St Paul's, and there the body rested while service was performed. On the next day, November 7, it started on the last stage of its journey to St Edward's Chapel in Westminster Abbey. Chosen citizens lined the way and kept order, while behind the car followed the City Fathers and the Companies, all in white, each Company headed by torchbearers. The priests of the churches on the way were at the doors of their places of worship, and as the body of Henry V. passed by, they "censed" the bier, while their choirs sang the *Venite*.

Beyond any doubt the mourning was genuine, for Henry's stern justice had made him loved, and, in London especially, his name was high. And besides, thoughtful men cannot but have asked themselves what was to follow the death of the strong ruler before whose glory the breath of faction had been hushed. And so along the bank of the broad Thames, past the cross which commemorated Eleanor of Castile at Charing, the long procession made its way to the grey abbey church on the Isle of Thorney and there, close to the shrine of St Edward, and in the midst of his warlike forebears, the greatest warrior of the Angevin line was laid to his rest.

A superb monument and chantry, a masterly achievement of Perpendicular art, were in due course erected at the east end of the chapel. It is still the most magnificent mediaeval tomb in Westminster, and still retains the shield, saddle and helmet carried through London at the funeral. Of the effigy only the wooden core remains—the head of silver and the coating of silver gilt elsewhere having been stolen during the Reformation.

CHAPTER VIII

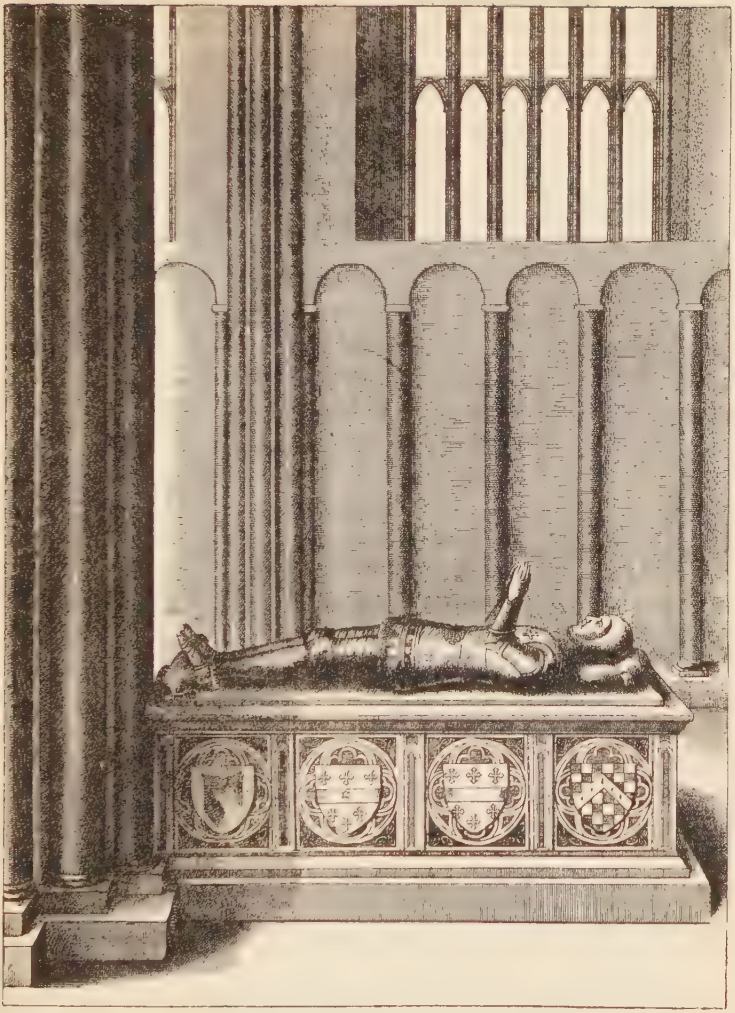
LONDON DURING THE WARS OF THE ROSES
1422 TO 1485

PART I

The Chaotic Reign of Henry VI

With the death of Henry V. and the accession of an infant of nine months there came upon London years heavy with evil happenings, although at first the prospects were not altogether disturbing, owing to the vigour and ability of the great conqueror's brother, John, Duke of Bedford, whom he had left Regent of France. For several years the tide of English conquest continued to flow, and one may surmise that the merchants of London fared not ill, since they must have secured many lucrative contracts. But, from the first, there were elements of disorder in the political situation. Henry's other surviving brother, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, was a restless and ambitious prince, who desired to hold a position in England similar to that occupied by Prince John in France. But the late king had well-founded doubts of Humphrey's capacity and steadiness, and the Royal Council, with Bishop Beaufort at its head, was resolved not to allow him to become too powerful. Also, the long minority of the new king enabled the nobles once more to become restive and troublesome. Between foreign war and mutterings of internal dissension the new reign did not promise well.

London soon became involved in the troubled politics of the day. To use the metaphor of the late Lord Salisbury she " backed the wrong horse " at the outset, being inclined to support the restless and unstable Humphrey of Gloucester, rather than John of Bedford and Henry Beaufort. The popularity of Prince Humphrey, the



THE TOMB OF SIR JOHN BEAUCHAMP, K.G. (*c.* 1315–*c.* 1370).

He was brother of Thomas, 11th Earl of Warwick and one of the original Knights of the Garter. This table tomb in the south aisle of Old St Paul's was without any inscription and became associated in the popular mind with Humphrey Duke of Gloucester—the "Good Duke Humphrey" of the ordinary Londoner. The saying to "dine with Duke Humphrey" indicated a dinnerless condition, since the south aisle of the Cathedral was the resort of the unemployed.

(*From the engraving by Hollar.*)

"Good Duke Humphrey," is somewhat difficult of explanation; apart from his love of culture he had not many titles to esteem. It is possible that his affable manners made him friends. Bishop Beaufort was proud and overbearing, unpopular also as an ecclesiastic of secular manners and enormous wealth: Prince John was far away in France, and seems not to have possessed the gift of winning public favour. So Humphrey, dwelling (after 1428) in great state in the palace which he built on the river front a little to the east of the site of Baynard's Castle, had matters very much his own way, while the Bishop, with his superficial pride, and very real patriotism and industry, was generally hated.

The regent began by attempting to disarm the hostility of Scotland, which was very dangerous at this time, for the French forces which supported the new king, Charles VII. (the Dauphin of 1422), swarmed with Scottish mercenaries. John Stuart, Earl of Buchan, brother of the Regent Albany, was in command with the title of Constable of France; and Archibald, Earl of Douglas, whom Homildon Hill and Shrewsbury had not cured of the desire of fighting England, had been created Count of Touraine. The young King James I., who had been interned in England since his capture by Henry IV., was released in 1423, and readily undertook to keep the peace with England. The alliance was sealed by his marriage with Joan Beaufort, niece of the great Bishop. The ceremony took place at the Church of St Mary Overie in Southwark (now the Cathedral) in February 1424. It is interesting to observe that the record in one of the London chronicles calls the King "Sir James Steward, Kyng of Scotlond."[1]

This step put an end to any further streaming of Scots men-at-arms into France and, in the following year, John of Bedford gained a splendid victory over the

[1] *Chron. of London*, ed. Kingsford, pp. 128-9.

motley forces of Charles at Verneuil. The Scots contingent was nearly destroyed; Buchan was slain and Douglas justified his nickname of "Tineman" (The Loser) by perishing on his last field. Everything looked well—but was not so. The fact was that England could not raise and keep in the field an army large enough to increase her hold on France. It was only by the help of the Burgundian faction, which had aided Henry V., that the party of the Dauphin could be kept in check, and now Humphrey of Gloucester chose to endanger everything by invading the Netherlands on behalf of his bigamous wife, Jacqueline, Countess of Hainault and Holland. He had no regard for her, but was keenly alive to the value of her possessions; and since Philip of Burgundy also had his eye upon them, Gloucester's action was at least ill-advised.

The invasion was a failure: Jacqueline was eventually forced to surrender and declare Duke Philip her heir. Humphrey callously deserted her, and was soon in the toils of the charming Eleanor Cobham, whom shortly afterwards he married. But his connection with the unfortunate Jacqueline seriously annoyed Philip of Burgundy, and laid the foundation of his desertion from the English alliance, although he did not actually do so until the death of Prince John in 1435.

For the next sixty years the history of London has a sombre background of warfare. For half that period it is the war with France; for the second half the succession of civil broils called the "Wars of the Roses." From first to last the country was troubled with internal strife between the great nobles, or between a great noble and a powerful local family which was not inclined to submit to his supremacy.

The famous Paston Letters, very many of which were written in London, throw some dry light upon the condition of the country and the disturbances which

were constantly taking place. The Pastons were an old-established landowning family of Norfolk, who in the fifteenth century devoted themselves to the law and at the same time, partly by good fortune, partly by shrewd marriages, greatly increased their property in Norfolk.

During the early part of the reign of Henry VI., the head of the house was William, a keen, pushing, perhaps somewhat unscrupulous man, who in 1429 became Chief Justice of the Common Pleas. He made an advantageous marriage with Agnes Berry, an heiress, and left a large estate to his son John, another energetic man of legal pursuits and tastes, who was closely connected with Sir John Fastolfe of Caister Castle in Norfolk, one of the most noted of the captains of the French war, the hero of the celebrated "Battle of the Herrings" at Rouvray in 1428. At his death in 1459, Fastolfe left the bulk of his property to Paston, but the Pastons had literally to fight for their rights for twenty years. John Paston was more than once imprisoned in the Fleet, and left the struggle still undecided at his death in 1466, to be waged henceforth by his two eldest sons, both of whom, oddly enough, were named John. The Pastons fought and negotiated, litigated and (probably) bribed, and John (I.) recovered Caister at last, leaving the family fortunes to his brother John (II.) who died in high favour with Henry VII., and in the enjoyment of great prosperity, in 1503.

The letters of the three Johns and those of their relatives and friends are of vast historical value, and, since for long periods they lived in London, have interest for those who follow the fortunes of the city. John the elder resided in the Inner Temple: his sons speak frequently of their place in Fleet Street. All three of them were blessed with loyal and energetic wives, who looked after things in Norfolk while their spouses stayed in London. The latter had a keen eye for their own

interests, and although once or twice they took the wrong side in those agitated times, they always managed to make their peace, and emerged from the Wars of the Roses with their heads on their shoulders and, apparently, more prosperous than ever. The letters will be cited repeatedly during the course of this chapter.[1]

There were ominous mutterings of civil war as early as 1426, when the differences between Humphrey of Gloucester and Bishop Beaufort came to a head. The Bishop fortified himself in the Tower, while Humphrey appealed to the Londoners, who rallied to his support, with the Mayor, John Coventry, at their head. There were riots, not unattended with bloodshed, until John of Bedford, leaving the French war, hurried back to arrange a peace.

The Londoners received him in state and presented him with 1000 marks in two silver-gilt bowls, but he was too angry to be polite and a city chronicler ruefully records that the donors "hadde but lytylle thanks."[2] Exactly what else they expected after their factious behaviour one hardly sees, but their belief in Duke Humphrey was difficult to quench, and they seem to have thought that they deserved thanks for bringing the Regent across from France in the midst of a crisis. In order to remove all causes of dissension, Beaufort patriotically retired to the Continent, leaving Gloucester as Protector of England, while Bedford was Regent of France. During his absence, the Bishop was created Cardinal by Pope Martin V. and apparently the Londoners repented of their hostility, for when Beaufort returned in 1428 the Mayor and Corporation, together with a goodly body of citizens, rode forth and escorted him home in honour.[3] They were already becoming tired

[1] *The Paston Letters*, ed. James Gairdner.

[2] Gregory's *Chronicle*, p. 160; *Chron. of London*, ed. Kingsford, p. 130.

[3] Gregory, p. 162.

of their not very worthy idol, Duke Humphrey. His desertion of the unfortunate Jacqueline annoyed their honest English hearts. The women of London, in 1427, actually sent to Parliament a petition protesting against his conduct, and next year the citizens, mindful of their commerce with Holland and Hainault, did the same.[1]

In 1429 the dastardly murder near Aldgate of a widow by a Breton, led to a burst of popular fury. The assassin took sanctuary in St George's, Southwark, and, according to the law in such cases, was permitted to leave England on oath never to return. But the blood of the Londoners was up, and the murder of the poor widow cried aloud for vengeance. As the murderer was being escorted by constables out of the city on his way to the coast, a crowd of infuriated women fell upon him, thrust the half-hearted guards aside, and did him to death with stones and showers of rubbish: "ffor ther whas a gret manye of them and no mercy ne no pity."[2]

Later in the year a disastrous accident took place at London Bridge. The passages between the arches was much narrowed and becoming more perilous owing to the extension of the "sterlings," or breakwaters, round the piers. At dusk on a November evening, the Duke of Norfolk (John Mowbray I.) was passing in his barge, attended by a large company, up the river from St Mary Overie, "bitwene iiij and ffyve of the bell ayenst nyght." Owing to a blunder of the coxswain, the boat collided with a sterling and capsized. The Duke himself, and two or three gentlemen who kept their heads, sprang or scrambled upon the sterling and were hauled on to the bridge with ropes, but all the rest were thrown into the river, and many were drowned, "the more Rewth whas."[3]

[1] Letter Book K, folio 50 b.
[2] *Chron. of London*, ed. Kingsford, p. 132.
[3] *Ibid.*, pp. 132 and 133.

BAYNARD'S CASTLE, TOWARDS THE WESTERN EXTREMITY OF LONDON'S MEDIAEVAL RIVER FRONT.

It was built after 1428 by Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and should not be confused with the earlier castle a little more to the west, where the Blackfriars' Monastery afterwards stood.

THE CUSTOMS HOUSE AND SHIPS IN THE POOL OF LONDON.

The vaulted arcade along the wharf, with the very picturesque stone and half timber work above made a most attractive feature of the water-side.

illumination in a 15th century MS.)

The little King Henry VI., hardly eight years of age, and destined to over forty more of misfortune and unhappiness, was crowned at Westminster on November 6, 1429. It was a splendid ceremony, and Gregory exerts himself in his description of its brilliance,[1] but over it all brooded the shadow of disaster. The city of London put in its usual claim to serve the King as butler at the banquet, and it was, as a matter of course, allowed. The Mayor, William Estfield, received the customary gold cup and ewer, which be bequeathed at his death to a grandson.[2] Probably the claim would have been allowed even if not advanced: the government was in great need of the monetary aid of London and could not afford to annoy the city.

The tide had already turned against the English in France. In the summer of 1429 "Jehan la Pucelle" had come from her village home to put heart into French soldiers, and inspire weak-kneed French politicians with the idea that here was a useful instrument which might be used and then thrown away. Before June was over she had saved Orleans, captured three English garrisons and totally routed an English army in fair fight at Pataye. Londoners were beginning to mutter at the bad news, and so, next year, there was rejoicing when the heroic girl, "the ffalse witche,"[3] betrayed by her miserable king and his worthless advisers, was captured at Compiègne. But though exasperated English and treacherous French might burn Joan of Arc at the stake, her work was not to be undone. Duke John took the boy-king to be crowned King of France at Paris, and London sent 10,000 marks,[4] to pay the disheartened troops. Cardinal Beaufort raised soldiers and advanced

[1] Gregory, 164-8.
[2] *Calendar of Wills, Court of Husting*, London, II. 509.
[3] *Chron. of London*, Kingsford, p. 133.
[4] Letter Book K, folio 84.

money with princely lavishness—to no purpose in the end.

The young King did not return to England until February 20, 1432. Great efforts were made to give him a royal reception. John Welles, the Mayor, with the Corporation and a great procession of mounted citizens, arrayed in white with gold badges, met him at Blackheath and welcomed him to his "Chamber" of London.[1] At Deptford he was met by 620 city clergy and 500 monks in full canonicals. The streets were richly decorated with tapestry and other adornments, and at every turn the lad's eyes were met by pageants and *tableaux* until he entered St Paul's. On the 22nd the Mayor and Aldermen waited on him at Westminster and presented their city's royal gift of £1000 in gold enclosed in a golden box. There were to be few more days of rejoicing in the sad life of Henry VI.

During his stay in France there was a curious rebellion near Abingdon, headed by a man named Jack Sharp. It was directed against priests: the rebels saying that they would sell priests' heads at three a penny! The rising was at once put down by Humphrey of Gloucester; many prisoners were hanged; and Jack Sharp's head was brought to London to be exposed on the Bridge tower, according to custom.[2] Lollardy was by no means yet crushed out of existence and the persecution of heretic priests continued intermittently. The Vicar of Thaksted[3] was burnt in Smithfield in 1431, and he was not the only victim during these gloomy years.

The chronicles of London naturally deal very much with foreign affairs at this time: the drain of money and men for the wretched French war never ceased. Duke John of Bedford died in 1435, and at the same time, the

[1] Letter Book K, 103 b and 104 b; Gregory, 173-5.
[2] *Chron. of London*, ed. Kingsford, p. 134.
[3] Modern Thaxted.

Duke of Burgundy finally deserted the English alliance. Paris at once surrendered to its rightful king, and next year Burgundy endeavoured to seal his tardy return to loyalty by retaking Calais. The threat to the town roused the pride of London, which promptly raised a strong force to strengthen the garrison. Cardinal Beaufort's nephew Geoffrey, titular Count of Mortain, and Lord Camoys took up the command. According to the London chronicle,[1] Philip of Burgundy had 40,000 men with him, but on July 12, 1436, he was driven from his entrenchments with the loss of 500 killed, and retreated into Picardy, leaving behind him "many a grete gonne and moch ordinaunce (? munitions) with moshe vetaill, fflesh, ffloure and wyne, and barell with bere a grete multitude,"[2] which doubtless rejoiced the hearts of the gallant Londoners.

A fortnight later Duke Humphrey landed with 10,000 troops, including contingents from all the larger towns of England, but he did nothing worthy of the considerable army under his command. His operations were comprised in a ten days' raid into Flanders, during which he sacked Poperinghe and Abeele.[3] The host then returned home without the loss of a man; safely but hardly gloriously, although London doubtless rejoiced to see its good men marching in safe and unscathed, as before on a certain occasion under Edward II.[4] Fifteenth-century Londoners would no doubt have been incredulous had they been told that some five hundred years later their city would provide scores of thousands of men to help to defend those two Flemish towns and that comparatively few of them would return; and yet this did come to pass.

[1] *Chron. of London*, ed. Kingsford, 139.
[2] *Ibid.*, 139–42.
[3] Given as "Belle" in the records.
[4] See p. 124.

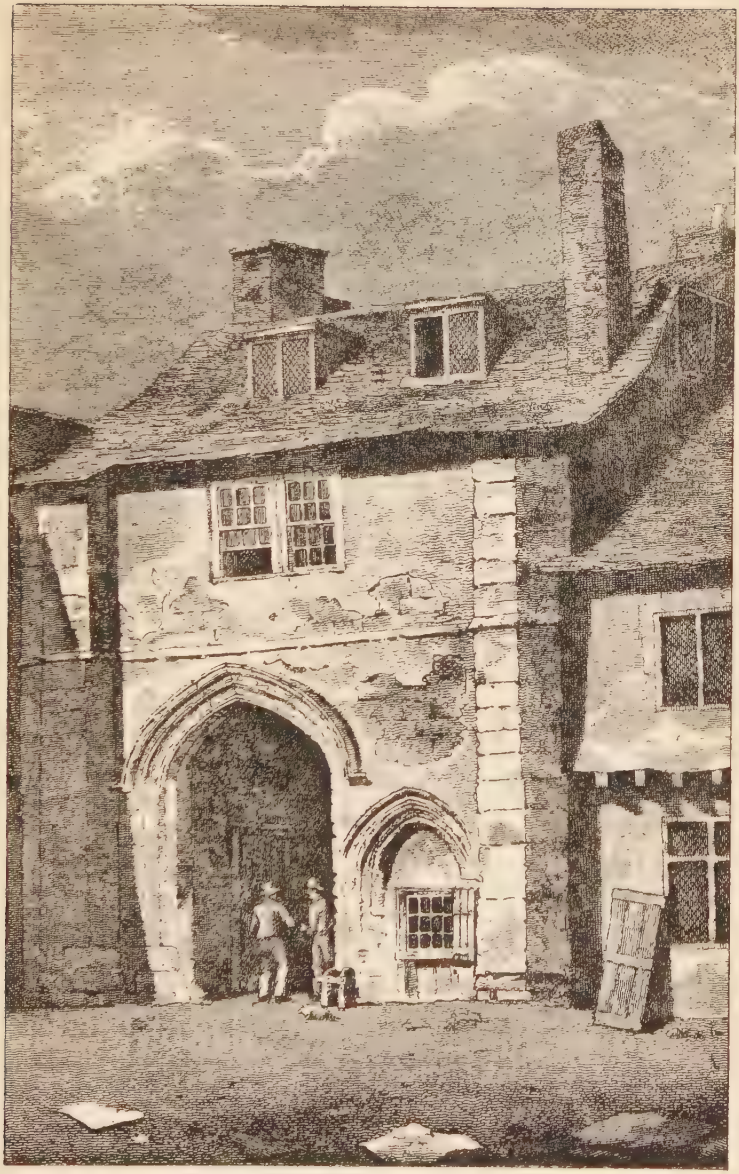
In 1437 there died at Bermondsey Abbey King Henry's mother, Katharine of France, and before the year was out Henry IV.'s widow, Joan of Navarre, also passed away at Havering-atte-Bower, where there was a royal shooting-box or minor palace in the great Forest of Essex. Neither was a woman of any mark, but by her second obscure marriage with her Welsh attendant, Owen Tudor, Queen Katharine left a son from whom the great Royal House of Tudor was to spring. Parliament met at Westminster on January 21, and to it came French envoys to treat on the question of peace. But in France matters seemed to be going better, and the English, like Pharaoh, hardened their hearts. Superstitious men might have read omens in the fact that during this year the Gate Tower of London Bridge[1] collapsed, carrying with it two arches of the bridge, but, says the chronicler piously, "no man perisshed, thankyd be god."[2]

Two years after this, a disaster of a different kind befell London:[3] the city was swept by a furious gale, which did great damage; among other things a "mekyll of leede (lead)" was carried off the Monastery of the Grey Friars and the "Tun" prison on Cornhill was partly blown down, so that the timber baulks of which it was constructed blocked the roadway "that nether horss ne cart myght passe throwe the strete." It was a miserable year for the country, pressed with demands for the French war, while the harvest had been so bad that wheat was at 40d. a bushel. Even rye cost 8d., and one of the London chronicles says that the people had to live mainly on beans and peas, more of which were consumed that winter than ever before. It

[1] There were apparently two gate towers at the southern end of London Bridge, but which this was is not stated.

[2] *Chron. of London*, ed. Kingsford, p. 142.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 145.



THE GATEHOUSE OF BERMONDSEY ABBEY AS IT APPEARED IN 1820.

was, perhaps, with some idea of propitiating the offended Deity that the citizens, not for the first time, tried to cleanse their abode from the moral point of view,[1] and once more carted prostitutes through the streets in "ray,"[2] hoods, with penitential crosses in their hands.

It is curious to read, amid reports of general distress, of tournaments at the Tower which lasted for two days, and in which the Duke of Norfolk and Sir Richard Woodville made a great figure.

The stress of the war made itself felt by new exactions, and in this year an aliens' tax was imposed—16d. on every householder and 6d. on each alien who was not a householder.[3] Perhaps it was to salve the growing discontent of London, that one of her foremost citizens, Estfield, was knighted. There are signs that the citizens were becoming weary of mismanagement and misfortune, for when, in 1440, Richard Wiche, vicar of Deptford, was burned on Tower Hill as a heretic, there was widespread mourning in all the wards—a rather significant admission. The only gleam of light in a gloomy time was that Cardinal Beaufort had, at last, persuaded some of the lords of the Royal Council that peace was becoming necessary. This was a sign that his influence was overcoming the restless intrigues of his troublesome nephew, Duke Humphrey, and in 1441 a domestic catastrophe practically ended that personage's active political career.

King Henry was now twenty years of age, but it was already plain that he would never be anything but a king in name. He was simply a harmless and rather witless youth, who might have made a fair monk, but was utterly unfit for the active business of life. He had no sense of the value of time or money, and his memory was very defective. No wife had been found for him,

[1] *Chron. of London*, Kingsford, p. 146.
[2] Coarse rough cloth.
[3] Letter Book K, folio 183 b.

and it was thought highly improbable that, if married, he would ever have a son. Duke Humphrey must often have reflected that he himself was the weak-minded youth's next-of-kin and natural successor, and if he did not do so, his wife Eleanor, beautiful and ambitious, was likely to remind him of the fact. The vision of the crown of England was evidently before her eyes: probably her unguarded remarks were reported where they could do her mischief, and, in 1441, she passed the limits of safety. With some confidential servants, a priest named Bolingbroke and a "witch," Margery Jourdmayne of Eye, she indulged in magical ceremonies, the object of which was said to be the discovery of the date of Henry's death. It is probable enough: it was an age of gross superstition, and the generation which had murdered Joan of Arc could not ignore the magical dabblings of Duke Humphrey's wife.

The conduct of the Duke himself is the strangest part of the strange story. He made no attempt to defend or screen his wretched spouse. It seems likely that some information of vital importance is missing: the point is that Duke Humphrey left the Duchess to her fate, which was bad enough, if not so cruel as that of the innocent Joan of Arc ten years before. She was sentenced to do public penance on three successive days in London, and afterwards to be imprisoned for life. Public penance meant walking barefooted and bareheaded, wrapped in a white sheet and carrying a weighty taper, from one fixed point to another, the humiliating pilgrimage ending in the offering of the taper in a church. The mere parade itself must have constituted a cruel ordeal for a delicately-nurtured woman of high birth, and to this were added the ignominious accessories of the white sheet, the candle and partial disrobing—all this in chilly November. In a summer month the unhappy woman would have been allowed no covering at all save the sheet.

Each day the unfortunate Eleanor was brought by water from Westminster to London. The first day's procession was from Temple Bar to St Paul's; the second from "The Swan," a famous hostelry in Thames Street, to Christchurch; the third from Queenhithe to St Michael's on Cornhill. At the landing place on each day, the Mayor and Corporation met and attended her on her mournful way. It seems obvious that great sympathy was felt for her and it is quite possible that she was a victim of political enmity. Yet guilty of playing with necromancy she probably was: certainly her conduct was foolish to a degree, if nothing worse; and she was, upon the whole, fortunate in escaping with her life and banishment to the Isle of Man, under the, no doubt, considerate wardenship of Sir John Stanley.[1]

It was perhaps in connection with the offence of Duchess Eleanor that on August 31 there was a bloody riot in "Fleetstreet" between some Londoners and retainers of the Court. Bows and bills were freely used, and there were many killed and wounded. Frays of the sort were but too common; it was impossible to prevent them; when weapons were forbidden the supporters of the factions carried clubs. These were interdicted, and then the rufflers filled their pockets with stones and bullets, with which they pelted each other. Disorder was rife.

The disgrace of his wife put an end to the political influence of Duke Humphrey. It had always been mischievous, since he stolidly supported the fatal policy of warfare with France. Thereby he, no doubt, appealed to the stubborn national pride which would not admit defeat, even when defeat was only too evident, but equally he committed England to the continuance of a disastrous and hopeless war. The result of his sullen retirement was to give the priority to Cardinal Beaufort,

[1] *Chron. of London*, Kingsford, pp. 148-9 and pp. 154-5; *Journal*, 3, folio 103 b.

whose chief assistants were his nephew Edmund Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, and William de la Pole, Earl (afterwards Marquess and later Duke) of Suffolk. The Cardinal's wise aim was to conclude peace with France on the least unfavourable terms which could be arranged, but he was old and almost worn out; and the chief power was exercised by Somerset and Suffolk. It was they who, in 1444, procured a truce with France at the price of the evacuation of the few fortresses still held in Maine and Anjou, while it was arranged that the young King should marry Marguerite, the daughter of René, Duke of Anjou, a relative of the French monarch. Somerset and Suffolk hoped that the truce, which lasted in an unsatisfactory fashion for five years, would lead to a permanent peace, but the sacrifices by which it was purchased produced much discontent in England.

In the same year a new charter was granted to London, by which the Mayor, Recorder and some of the senior Aldermen were definitely confirmed as justices of the peace, and the "soil"[1] of the Thames within the city liberties was granted to the Corporation. This meant a certain cession of land from Surrey to London, and there was naturally some opposition in the southern county. It was the beginning of the process of expansion which presently extended the bounds of London so as to include large slices of four counties.[2]

Despite the unpopularity of the royal betrothal, Suffolk was advanced to the rank of Marquess. On May 18, 1445, Marguerite of Anjou made a splendid entry into London. She was met on Blackheath by the Mayor, Corporation, and principal citizens, arrayed in blue gowns embroidered with their Company badges, and scarlet hoods.[3] The streets were decorated and

[1] By this may be inferred foreshore rights.
[2] Letter Book K, folio 220 b.
[3] *Chron. of London*, Kingsford, p. 156.

there was a great display of pageantry. The coronation took place at Westminster on May 30 in the presence of a splendid assembly of princes and nobles, who, before ten years were past, were to be cutting each others' throats.

Humphrey of Gloucester is said to have received his new niece by marriage with the greatest honour; but such effusions counted for little, it is to be feared. The Wars of the Roses were in the making. In the gorgeous array at Westminster there stood beside the soured and discontented Duke Humphrey, his younger kinsman, Richard, Duke of York, cautious, patriotic, already known as an able warrior, and with them great nobles such as the Earls of Salisbury and Warwick, who were bitterly at variance with the peace-at-any-price party led by Suffolk and Somerset. The young Queen was likely to be a firebrand. She was a handsome, high-spirited and decidedly imperious girl of fifteen, the very opposite of her nerveless husband, except that she took an intelligent interest in his educational foundations. In the very nature of things she fell under the influence of Suffolk, who had negotiated her marriage, and this meant opposition to what may perhaps be called the patriotic party, headed by Richard of York.

Humphrey of Gloucester died somewhat mysteriously in 1447, not without suspicion of having been poisoned by Suffolk.

His death had a gruesome sequel. Five of his household were involved in the charge of treason hanging over him at the time, and were sentenced to the grim penalty for that crime. They were dragged from the Tower to Tyburn, strung up and cut down still living, to undergo the horrible second part of the punishment, viz. disembowelling and quartering. They were stripped, and the hangman was just preparing for the final torture, when Suffolk, or his agent, produced their pardon.[1] It

[1] Fabyan's *Chronicle*, sub anno 1447.

is to be hoped that the late arrival was accidental: the unhappy men had truly suffered more than the agonies of death.

Cardinal Beaufort followed Duke Humphrey six weeks later, and, in 1449, breaches of the truce by insubordinate English officers brought about an invasion by the French of Normandy, the last-remaining English province in northern France. Its governor, the Duke of Somerset, showed himself quite unequal to the difficulties of his position, while Prince Richard, Duke of York, the ablest of the royal house, was far away in Ireland, "shelved" as Viceroy by the jealousy and bad judgment of the Queen and his rivals the Beauforts. Disaster followed on disaster: before the year was out Rouen and half of Normandy were lost for ever, and the result was a furious outbreak of indignation against Suffolk. He was duly arrested and imprisoned in the Tower and impeached before his peers. Riot was so much the order of the day that the Mayor and Corporation took extraordinary precautions against it, and "grete wacche was made in the Cyte all the parliament tyme."[1]

At a rumour that Suffolk was to be acquitted, there were risings in different parts, one under a captain who called himself "Blewberd." They were put down, but were symptomatic of the general discontent. The Duke, who was perhaps more sinned against than sinning, was not to escape. The articles of impeachment against him are extant;[2] they are a strange mixture of facts and fables—some of the latter utterly absurd—but the feeling against him was so strong that his death by violence was regarded as inevitable. To save his life the King banished his fallen minister for five years. Suffolk, however, felt so certain that his end was near, that, before embarking, he indicted a solemn letter of

[1] *Chron. of London*, ed. Kingsford, p. 158.

[2] *Rolls of Parliament*, V. 177; *Paston Letters*, No. 76.

farewell and admonition to his son, which gives a favourable impression of his character as a man, whatever be thought of his performances as a statesman.

On the 4th of May news reached London that he had been intercepted by a squadron headed by a ship named *Nicholas of the Tower*, and that he had been dragged into a boat, in which his head was hacked off with repeated blows of a rusty sword.[1]

While the faction strife was raging in England, matters in France went from bad to worse. On April 15, 1450, a force of 4500 Englishmen was nearly annihilated at Formigny, and by August Cherbourg was the last Norman fortress still held by England.

The sacrificing of Suffolk was not enough. Early in June 1450 there was a great rising in Kent under a somewhat mysterious leader, calling himself John Mortimer and cousin to the popular Duke, Richard of York, and who is generally believed to have been a veteran soldier named "Jak Cade." The rebels assembled on Blackheath, where they remained encamped for a week. Sir John Fastolfe sent a trusted servant named Payn as envoy to obtain a copy of their demands, and Payn, in a letter to Judge Paston, gave a graphic account of his fortunes among the rebels.[2] He barely escaped with his life: Cade told him plainly that he was quite well aware that Fastolfe had collected in Southwark a force of disbanded veterans, and Payn was so much impressed by the numbers and determination of the insurgents that he advised his master to dismiss his levies, for they would be helpless—and this Fastolfe weakly did.

There is not much doubt that Cade either had, or thought that he had, the approval of many men of high rank: his chief assistant was Robert Poynings, a turbulent country gentleman, later married to John Paston's sister Elizabeth. The paper of grievances put forth dealt

[1] *Paston Letters*, 93. [2] *Ibid.*, 99.

chiefly with the national misfortunes and the removal of the unpopular ministers of the Suffolk-Somerset party.

The King, who was holding a parliament at Leicester, came to London, and the ministers collected a force to suppress the insurrection.[1] Thereupon the rebels retreated into Kent, but, finding themselves pursued by a detachment under Sir Humphrey Stafford, they turned and routed it, killing its commander. At the news of this defeat the royal army broke up; many of the men said plainly that their sympathies were with the rebels and demanded the execution of the unpopular Treasurer, Lord Say; Ayscough, Bishop of Salisbury, the Chancellor, and others. Essex also rose in revolt, and the unhappy King, with disaffection all around, fled to Kenilworth, leaving London to defend itself.

The Tower was held by Lord Scales with a strong garrison. In the city opinion was divided. The Mayor, Thomas Chalton, and the upper classes generally, although disposed to sympathise with the insurgents in their demand for a better administration, would have preferred to keep them out; but many of the craftsmen and apprentices openly sided with Cade. Late in the day, on July 1, the Kentish host marched into Southwark and quartered itself there for the night. Cade kept order by stern measures, and rode before his men arrayed in the gold-studded brigandine of Sir Humphrey Stafford. On the same day the rebels of Essex arrived at Mile End.

In the city, the Mayor and Aldermen made an attempt to conciliate the insurgents. The Royal Council, afraid of the tumult, had sent an order empowering the Corporation and the judges to hold enquiry into the conduct of "all persons that were traitorous, extorcioners, or oppressours off the Kynges people"—a rather wide

[1] Authorities for Cade's Rebellion are Gregory's *Chronicle*, pp. 190-193; *Chron. of London*, Kingsford, pp. 159-62; Holinshed, III. 224; *Journal*, 5, folios 36 b, 39, 40 b.

scope—but the judges had vanished, whereat the Londoners were "right evyll content." However, a sort of informal enquiry was held on July 3, and at the demand of the "commons" two unpopular aldermen, Philip Malpas and Robert Horne, were degraded and confined. In the midst of these agitated proceedings, the rebels forced their way across London Bridge. Later investigations seemed to prove that the gate was opened by sympathisers within, partly out of friendliness, partly because Cade was threatening an assault. Richard Philip, a grocer, and Thomas Godfrey, a spurrier, were apparently the persons concerned. As he rode in, Cade cut the ropes of the drawbridge so that it should not be raised and his communication by the bridge interrupted. Before the Church of St Magnus-the-Martyr at the northern end of the bridge, he proclaimed that no man should plunder on pain of death; but when he reached London Stone his exultation overcame him and, striking it with his sword, he roared out "Now is Mortimer Lord of the City." The action, incidentally, shows the veneration attaching to this relic of antiquity.

Once in London, the rebels proceeded to their self-imposed duty of executing "rough justice" on unpopular ministers. They still respected the city: each night they returned to their quarters in Southwark, and affected to act with the Mayor and Corporation. A summons to Lord Say was sent to the Tower, and Lord Scales apparently surrendered him without question—or else the unfortunate Treasurer showed a touching confidence in his own innocence and the English instinct for fair play. He was brought to the Guildhall before the Mayor and the royal judges, but in the midst of the proceedings Cade and his fellows took Say out of the hands of his guards, dragged him, like Walter de Stapeldon, to Chepe, and there beheaded him. His son-in-law, James Crowmer, late Sheriff of Kent, was also murdered,

and the two heads were paraded on spears through the city, the bearers, with savage mockery, frequently approaching them face to face as if in the act of kissing.

Other murders followed, and then Cade set the example of pillage by robbing the houses of Malpas and a certain Geerst. This was his ruin: his men naturally followed his evil lead, and the citizens became alarmed and alienated. Whatever they might feel regarding their weak government, they had no wish to see "Royall London" sacked by an undisciplined mob. Says one shrewd city chronicler: "if he [Cade] had not fallyn to Robbery it is to deme he myght have goon fer in the lande, ffor the Kyng and all the lordes were departid except the Lord Scalis that kept the Tower." But his lapse into rapine sealed his fate.[1]

In the evening of the 5th-6th the Mayor got into communication with Lord Scales. He could spare few men; but he sent Matthew Gough, a veteran of the French war, to take command of the city bands. At ten o'clock all was ready, and the sturdy Londoners tramped down Bridge Street to attack the rebels, while the guns of the Tower opened fire on Southwark. The rebels, under their experienced captain, had had warning and met the attackers on the bridge. From ten until nine o'clock on the next morning the battle lasted, the citizens at one time being thrust back as far as St Magnus the Martyr, at another charging right into Southwark. The fighting was furious: on the side of the Londoners Matthew Gough was slain, as were Aldermen Sutton and Heysant; and, beside the slaughter of fighting men, there was much loss of life among the dwellers on the bridge, for many houses were fired or damaged as the combat surged backward and forward along the narrow street, with the Thames roaring below through the narrow arches. The end of it was a savage

[1] *Chron. of London*, Kingsford, p. 161.

grapple at the south end of the bridge, and the rebels, finding themselves on the point of defeat, set fire to the drawbridge and its tower to stop the advance of the Londoners. So the battle ended, with the citizens holding London safely and the rebels still in Southwark.

On the following day diplomacy lent its aid to the efforts of the valiant Londoners. A proclamation was issued granting a general pardon to the rebels, with the result that they disbanded almost *en masse*. Cade was left with no more than a knot of desperadoes, with whom he made an effort to keep up the rebellion. A price of 1000 marks was set upon his head, and he was ultimately brought to bay and slain at Heathfield, in Sussex, by Alexander Iden, Sheriff of Kent. The usual sanguinary reprisals followed, and the gate of London Bridge showed a grim garnish of twenty-three heads, with that of Cade in their midst.

But trouble was only beginning. Cade's rising had behind it genuine national feeling. As has been noticed, the citizens of London were inclined to support it, and, had the rebels kept good order, it might have succeeded. The government was thoroughly discredited. Normandy was lost, a disaster generally and not unjustly attributed to the mismanagement of Somerset ; and even Guienne, the last fragment of the Angevin dominion in France, was invaded. Men's eyes turned naturally to Richard of York, the one member of the royal family whose reputation was unstained. He had been " shelved " by being made Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, while Somerset was Viceroy of Normandy, but, as it turned out, the " shelving " was entirely to Richard's advantage, while Somerset was discredited in every respect.

The Duke of York left Ireland in the same year (*i.e.* 1450), rallied his friends, and proceeded to London, accompanied by his firm friends and relatives by marriage, Richard Neville, Earl of Salisbury, and his son Richard,

GOLD AND SILVER COINS OF THE 14TH AND 15TH CENTURIES MINTED IN LONDON.

1. Silver groat of Edward III. 2. The first gold noble of Edward III. The L in the centre of the cross signifies the London mint. 3. The first angel of Edward IV., gold; St George and the Dragon on the obverse. 4. Rose noble of Edward IV., gold. 5. Silver shilling of Henry VII.

(*British Museum.*)

Earl of Warwick, also by the Duke of Norfolk, the Earl of Devonshire, and other lords. Somerset, abandoning Cherbourg, hurried to London with the wreck of his army, and the stage was now set for the drama which was to be enacted for thirty years.

Duke Richard first cleared himself, in a personal interview with the harmless King, of suspicion of complicity in Cade's revolt, and demanded the impeachment of the incompetent Somerset. On November 6th Parliament met, and there was a sharp altercation between the Dukes. On the 1st of December Somerset was put under arrest in the Blackfriars' monastery, and the Londoners indicated their sense of the low estimation in which they held him by pillaging his lodgings. Prince Richard showed a most laudable desire to keep within the bounds of strict law: he used his influence to restore order: a man concerned in the outrage was beheaded in Chepe: and to enforce the lesson, the King himself rode through the city escorted by the peers and their followers in armour, while the route was lined by the citizens in full military array. It was a splendid martial display, but ominous of civil strife. As Gregory pessimistically remarks, "if hit hadde been in Fraunce, but not in Ingelonde, for it boded little good."[1]

It might have been good had King Henry been able to take and keep an independent line of conduct, but he was always influenced by those about him; and Somerset was speedily released and made Captain of Calais, which was now in great peril. For the next four years Richard of York was endeavouring to obtain what would now be called ministerial control, and being continually thwarted by his rival. His moderation seems attested by the fact that, although the King's helplessness was apparent, although the country was in a state of anarchy as far as the nobles were concerned,

[1] *Chron. of London*, Kingsford, p. 162; Gregory's *Chron.*, p. 19 b.

and although the popular rage at the disasters in France was great, he made no attempt to seize the crown. Yet he was not only First Prince of the Blood, but had by birth as good a claim to the throne as Henry VI., being the descendant of the third and fifth sons of Edward III., while Henry was the great-grandson of the fourth (John of Gaunt).

The opposition of Somerset is explained largely by the fact that he was a left-handed son of the royal house, being descended from John of Gaunt's liaison with Katharine Swynford. Somerset was favoured by the Queen, and, so far as he was capable of any active sentiment, by the King. Richard had the weight of public opinion behind him, especially in London, and was known as capable and moderate, while Somerset was discredited. London watched and waited. Its sympathies were certainly with Richard of York; but it had been extremely loyal to the House of Lancaster and, on the whole, was not disposed to support any attack upon the harmless King.

Guienne and Gascony were lost in 1451, and in the following year Duke Richard, endeavouring to execute an armed protest, was induced by false promises to dismiss his army, and fell into the hands of his opponents. London still held the balance, and declined to open its gates to a potential rebel, even though its sympathies were with him. When the Duke, having dismissed his followers, went confidently to the royal tent he was dismayed to find Somerset present and obviously exultant. He was led through London as if he were a prisoner, and required to swear allegiance at the altar of St Paul's.[1] No more was done; and it is improbable that anything more could have been done. Duke Richard was popular; the government was impotent; and, whatever Queen Margaret and Somerset may have

[1] *Chron. of London*, ed. Kingsford, p. 163.

wished, they were deterred by the news that the Yorkist partisans had rallied at the news of their leader's kidnapping, and were moving on London with a force said to be 10,000 strong. "Wherefor he was libertid to goo at his wille." But it is likely enough that he went with an embittered mind, certain that whatever he might do his rivals were bent on his destruction.

Matters did not improve next year. The King became insane at the moment when the continuance of the Lancastrian line seemed assured by the birth in October of a son, the ill-fated Prince Edward, who was to fall at Tewkesbury eighteen years afterwards. His father was not capable of recognising his heir, and the event, so far from stabilising the dynasty, was held to be of ill-omen, occurring as it did on top of the defeat of the old Earl of Shrewsbury at Castillon and the final loss of Guienne.

London prepared for emergencies. In November every householder was ordered to provide himself with armour and weapons, and at the same time an injunction was issued against any unguarded speech or action which might provoke a tumult. Some of the aldermen proposed in the Common Council that a message of respect should be taken to Prince Richard, but the motion was rejected.[1] The attitude of the city was perfectly correct; it was strong against anarchy and bad government, but equally firm against disloyalty. The Mayor and Corporation duly waited on Queen Margaret to express their felicitations, and a little later paid their respects to Duke Richard.

Some months of tension followed. Somerset was interned in the Tower in December, and in April 1454, Richard was appointed Protector. His supremacy lasted for less than a year. Disorder was rife, but the Protector made determined efforts to cope with it, also

[1] *Journal*, 5, folios 131, 132 b, 133 b.

with the question of the defence of Calais, which was threatened by the French. London was called upon for money as usual, but the demand was not well received; the citizens pleaded poverty, and pointed to the heavy losses which they had sustained of late owing to the disaster of the war, and especially by the interruption of their trade with Flanders. There can be no doubt that many of the less opulent Londoners were hard hit; when a small subsidy was raised in November 1454, eleven wards out of twenty-five failed to contribute their quantum.[1]

The notices of life in London during these agitated years are curiously interesting: it is strange to observe how, amid war within and without, with ambitious nobles fighting for precedence, and hostile retainers of great lords swaggering about thirsting for combat, the city "carried on" in an oddly imperturbable fashion. It is quaint to read in the midst of notices of disorder and civil strife how John Norman, the Mayor of 1454, decided to make his procession to Westminster by water, and accordingly went in his barge, followed by a long train of boats bearing the Aldermen and principal citizens. The new departure pleased the Thames watermen immensely, and they celebrated it with a song beginning:

"Rowe thy bote, Norman."

"Which newe custume," says a London chronicler, "was welle allowed, and hathe contynued from his daies to this season."[2]

And in the Paston Letters there is evidence of the same kind. John Paston the elder, in his chambers in the Inner Temple, must sometimes have wondered whether his life would be his own at the end of the day, and added to this, his wife writes to him of all sorts of

[1] *Journal*, 5, folio 206. [2] *Chron. of London*, Kingsford, p. 164.

Hic iacet Thomas Wylliams Gentilh et margarita uxor eius qui quid
Thomas obiit xvj die mens Januarij Anno dñi mcccc lxxxxv et pdicta
Margarita obiit die mens Anno dñi mcccc
quorum

BRASS TO THOMAS WYLLIAMS, GENTLEMAN, AND HIS WIFE MARGARET IN THE CHURCH OF ST HELEN, BISHOPSGATE.

Thomas died in 1495. The appeal for God's mercy upon his soul was afterwards mutilated. The date of Dame Margaret's demise was never filled in. The girdle worn by the lady was a notable feature of women's costume during this period (see p. 214).

troubles and fears in Norfolk. Yet, amid anarchy and anxiety, one finds continually the quaintest little touches of domesticity. Things are in such a pass in Norfolk that Mistress Paston writes anxiously for crossbows wherewith to defend the Pastons' mansion against hostile neighbours—and, almost in the same breath, she asks her husband to send her stuff for her new hood and their daughter's dress,[1] also she requires sugar and almonds for her own private enjoyment.

When London was in trepidation over the dangerous dispute between Richard of York and Somerset, and the Londoners lived in daily expectation of being called to arms, Mistress Paston wrote to her husband (June 3, 1451) not to forget his "fayr dowgteris gyrdyl," and to remind the Rev. Mr Gloys to buy some "Unguentum Album." A few weeks later she writes again: this time she is not well, and needs a "potte of treacle" for medicinal purposes. In the following year, when matters looked gloomier than ever, the lady still has time to write to her husband for things of little account; will Mr Paston send her another "loff of sugar" and remember the "gyrdill" for the daughter?[2]

London kept on its way doggedly: its sturdy citizens, in full armour, kept the police efficiently on those occasions when the place was thronged with the swashbuckling retainers of the rival nobles. Constant dissension came at last to a head in 1455: Richard of York was convinced, or allowed himself to be convinced, that the only course open to him was a *coup d'état*. The result was the battle or skirmish of St Albans on May 23, in which Somerset was killed, together with the Earls of Northumberland and Buckingham. But still there was no intention of deposing the helpless King. The victorious lords escorted him with great respect to London, and contented themselves with forming a

[1] *Paston Letters*, 67. [2] *Ibid.*, 163, 167, 178.

ministry with Duke Richard as Protector, the Earl of Salisbury as Chancellor, and the Earl of Warwick, Captain of Calais.

So far all might seem promising. But blood had now been shed in open civil war, and the death of some of the greatest lords of the Lancastrian party had merely thrown the continuance of the contest into the hands of their embittered heirs. Moreover, the haughty and vindictive young Queen could not be kept from her husband, over whom she quickly asserted her former influence. For four years the struggle continued in a subterranean manner, the smouldering fire showing frequent signs of bursting into a blaze.

The Londoners had their work cut out to keep order in their own particular corner of the beargarden of England, and they did it stubbornly and well.

In June 1456 the reappearance of Halley's comet, very near the Earth, with its sabre-shaped tail stretching across a third of the heavens,[1] aroused general alarm and foreboding of evil, which was more or less fulfilled on the spot in the form of a violent outbreak against the foreign element—the Lombards, as they were generally called. Arising from a trifling brawl, it swelled into what threatened to become a general sack of the aliens' houses by a mob of "hand crafty-men, apprentices and other lowse men." Action was promptly taken by the Mayor, William Marow, and the "good and well disposed people of the Cite," and the revolt was soon suppressed. A number of prisoners were committed to Newgate, and a court, upon which the Duke of Buckingham sat with the Mayor, proceeded to try them. The temper of the rioters was very dangerous: they had merely taken refuge in their houses, and intended to sound Bow Bell, and on its summons to attack the

[1] *Chron. of London, Vitellius,* Kingsford, p. 166. Authority for identification as Halley's comet: Prof. Simon Newcomb in *Ency. Brit.*

Guildhall. Buckingham and other peers were scared and left London forthwith, leaving the Mayor to cope with the situation. Two or three of the ringleaders were convicted and hanged, and with that the disturbance died out.[1]

Shortly afterwards Richard of York's Protectorship came to an end, and again the country was involved in political turmoil. Brawls were frequently threatened in London, but the citizens kept stern peace. In 1457 there was an outbreak in Newgate which the prisoners seized and held for a considerable time against the citizen-police.[2] Needless to say the mutineers were "sore ponysshed w^t^ Irons and ffetters." It is some relief from the wearisome story of political unrest and threats of civil war to hear of "four greate ffysshes" taken in the Thames between Erith and London. The chronicler's natural history was at fault, for two of the "fishes" were, in fact, whales; the third being a sword-fish and the last a "mors maryne," *i.e.* walrus or morse.

In the following year the outlook seemed blacker than ever. A strenuous effort was made to reconcile the rival factions of York and Lancaster-Somerset. But no lord felt himself safe unless he had a powerful guard, and the swarms of armed retainers pouring into London caused the citizens to dread that their streets might at any moment become a battlefield. Richard of York brought 400 men; Salisbury 500; Somerset and Exeter 800; Northumberland and the northern lords 1500; Warwick 600.

Great alarm prevailed in the city. Five thousand citizens were under arms; and the Mayor, Godfrey Boleyn, was constantly on horseback making the rounds. The upshot of this vigilance was that a hollow truce was temporarily patched up: both parties went in state to service in St Paul's on Lady Day, passing through streets

[1] *Chron. of London, Vitellius*, Kingsford, p. 166. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 167.

guarded by the watchful citizens. Of all the strange and curious happenings in the capital this must have seemed to many one of the very strangest. The King led the way; Richard followed, leading the Queen, who hated and feared him; and behind came hand-in-hand many pairs of rivals who had lately been at daggers drawn and before long were actually to slay each other.[1]

For a few months matters went well enough. The vigorous Warwick was appointed Captain of Calais; and at once signalised himself by winning a victory over a Spanish fleet of twenty-eight sail, of which six were taken and six sunk. But old grudges were not easily forgotten, and London was again the scene of furious riots. At the end of 1458 there was a bloody fray in Fleet Street;[2] and early in the next year another between the retainers of the King and Warwick, who had come home with much credit and popularity. The civil war now broke out afresh. For once in his life, Henry VI. showed a spark of the spirit of his father: Sir Andrew Trollope with the "Owd Sowdiours of Caleys (Calais)," who formed the best portion of the Yorkist army, deserted; and Duke Richard and his supporters dispersed, the Duke himself going to Ireland while Salisbury and Warwick, with Edward, Earl of March, their leader's eldest son, fled first to Guernsey, and finally took refuge at Calais, where the garrison was devoted to the Yorkist cause.

A year of suspense followed. A Parliament at Coventry attainted Richard of York, his children and followers. This was in November 1459. The writs were issued on October 9, and, two days later, the Common Council of London sent a deputation to assure the King of their loyalty and the measures taken for securing the public peace. They also offered a gift of

[1] *Chron. of London, Vitellius*, Kingsford, p. 168. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 169.

1000 marks.[1] The inference is that London was still disposed to stand by the House of Lancaster, although the maladministration of Queen Margaret's adherents and creatures was everywhere exciting the utmost discontent.

Early in 1460 a royal commission was sent to the Mayor to collect troops for war against the late Duke of York and his adherents.[2] This caused much discontent, and the city at once protested, on the ground that the measure would infringe its cherished franchise. The influence of London became more plainly evident than ever: the King declared that its liberties should in no way be prejudiced. But it seems that the mischief had been done: the city began to look to itself. Arrangements were made for the purchase of arms and armour; and for guarding the gates and walls.[3] The citizens had no confidence in king or lords, and were clearly determined to be ready for whatever might befall. In the midst of anxiety and preparations came news that Warwick, Salisbury and Edward of March had landed at Sandwich and were marching towards London.

London was half-hearted. The Mayor, William Hulyn, seems to have been loyal. He consulted with the Lords Scales and Hungerford, who held the Tower, and with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops in the city. A deputation was sent requesting the disaffected lords to avoid London and pursue their way to Northampton, where Henry was then resident. Meanwhile the gates were closed and the walls patrolled, and all the citizens were called under arms.

But it is clear that, beneath all this outward show, the leaven of discontent was fermenting, for a letter from the three earls was received and read, and on July 2, 1460, they were allowed to enter the city un-

[1] *Journal*, 6, folios 145, 163. [2] *Ibid.*, folio 224 b.
[3] *Ibid.*, 6, folios 197 b and 203 b.

opposed. The Common Council voted a loan of £1000 to the "rebel" lords. Not only this, but Salisbury was at once supported by the citizens and the Thames watermen in a blockade of the Tower. It was starved into surrender on the 19th, and Lord Scales, attempting to take sanctuary at Westminster, was murdered by the watermen.[1]

Before this, on the 16th, King Henry had been brought into London as a state prisoner, having been captured by the Yorkists at Northampton. Order was restored in the city by Warwick; and, in October, the famous parliament was held at Westminster, in which Richard of York definitely claimed the throne by right of descent, though he agreed to compromise his claim by being recognised only as heir-apparent. But there remained to be reckoned with the proud and masterful Queen, who was rallying the rough Northerners to her standard. On December 2, the new heir-apparent left London to oppose her, taking with him his second son, Edmund of Rutland, and Salisbury, and leaving Warwick to guard the city. Edward of March had been sent to Wales to oppose Henry's half-brother, Jasper Tudor, Earl of Pembroke. On the last day of the year (1460) Richard was utterly defeated and killed at Wakefield. John Hardowe, who had led the London contingent, was captured and beheaded; and Margaret advanced upon the capital.

In the city there was much alarm. Word came that the wild Northerners burned and pillaged along their line of march; and the news of the wholesale executions ordered by Queen Margaret was not reassuring. A very strict watch was kept in London, "ffor it was reported that the Queene w^t^ the Northern men wold come downe to the Citie and Robbe and dispoile

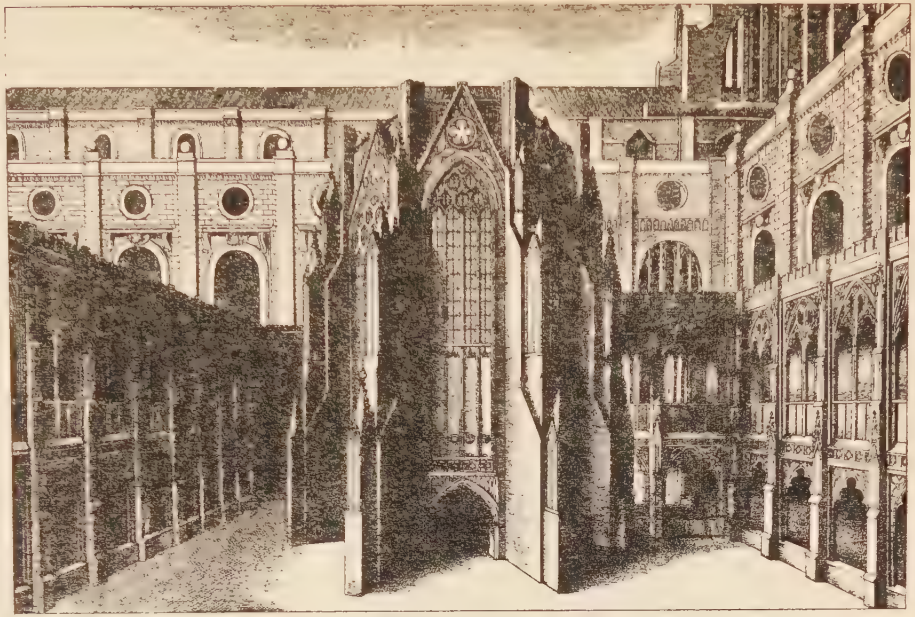
[1] *Journal*, 6, folios 237-9 b, 253, 254. *Eng. Chron.* (Camden Society, No. 64), p. 98.

the Citie and distroy it utterly and all the Sowth Cuntre."

Alarm became something like panic when, on February 17 (1461) fugitives came in with tidings that Margaret had completely defeated Warwick and the Duke of Norfolk at St Albans, retaken her husband, and celebrated her victory with a crop of executions. Warwick and Norfolk had been driven off their line of retreat on London, so that the city was left to itself, threatened by an army said to be at least 20,000 strong, but more probably about 12,000.

The gates were closed and the walls guarded. The Northern "prickers" or fore-riders clattered up to the gates and shouted for admittance. On meeting a blunt refusal many of them galloped round to Westminster and "disported" themselves: others skirmished before the walls and some were killed. The Londoners were determined that their city should not be tamely surrendered to a host of undisciplined marauders, although there is reason to believe that many citizens were still disposed to stand by the Lancastrian cause.

Negotiations went on for several days. At last everything seemed to be arranged. The Queen and her helpless husband engaged that their unruly host should not enter the city, while the Londoners undertook to supply it with provisions. But, just as the provision train was setting forth, word reached the city that Prince Edward, who had beaten Jasper Tudor, had rallied the remainder of Warwick's army and was in full march on London. A determined crowd rushed to Cripplegate and prevented the egress of the waggons: evidently the Commons had seen enough of the Northern "prykkers" to have conceived feelings of bitter hostility towards them, and were by no means at one with the Mayor and the magnates. Deprived of the expected supplies, the Queen's advisers had to consider whether



THE CHAPTER HOUSE AND CLOISTER OF OLD ST PAUL'S.

The placing of the Chapter House in the Cloister was unique, and the two floors to the four sides of the enclosure was perhaps the only example in England. Masking the Norman nave and south transept appears the 17th-century work of Inigo Jones.

(*From the engraving by Hollar.*)

they should attempt to storm the city or fall back on the North. They shrank from the prospect of an assault on the well-manned walls, and so chose the second and, as it proved, fatal alternative. The disorderly host broke up and retreated northward, ravaging and killing; and Edward and Warwick entered London on Thursday, February 28, with 5000 fighting men.

Whatever its feelings had hitherto been, London was now determined to hold by the Yorkist cause. The behaviour of the Northerners had roused bitter hostility which was increased by the news that after St Albans the Queen had executed all her most distinguished prisoners, including Sir Thomas Kyriel, a grey-haired veteran of the French war. Edward took up his residence in Baynard's Castle, and on March 2, Warwick convoked a great assembly of the troops and citizens in St John's Fields. A detailed statement of the shortcomings of the present government was read out; and the multitude was called upon to declare if King Henry VI. were fit to reign. There was a general shout of "Nay! Nay!" Then it was demanded if they would accept as their monarch the Earl of March, whose handsome face they had cheered two days before as he rode into the city. In reply came enthusiastic shouts of "Yea! Yea!" A deputation was at once directed to take the news to Edward "whereof," says the chronicler, "he thanked God and theym, and by the advyce of the Bishoppis of Caunterbury and of Exeter, and therle of Warwyk w^{t} other he took it upon hym."[1]

In this manner was concluded at London the disastrous reign of the weak, and finally imbecile, son of the idolised victor of Agincourt.

[1] For the concluding portions of this chapter the principal authorities are: *Journal*, 6, folios 35, 35 b, 37 b, 40; Gregory's *Chronicle*; and the *London Chronicle*, *Vitellius* (edited by Kingsford), 172-4.

PART II

Under the House of York

On March 4, 1461, Edward IV. went in state to St Paul's and thence to Westminster Hall, where he took his seat on the throne and was again acclaimed as King by a vast crowd with repeated shouts of Yea! Yea! He then repaired to the Abbey, where all the principal personages present did homage to him as their sovereign lord. He does not seem to have been crowned, probably because there was no crown available. Next day he was proclaimed in London, and came from Westminster to St Paul's. The coronation banquet seems to have been held in the Bishop's Palace, where the new King received the Mayor and Aldermen, and promised to safeguard the liberties of the city. The popular nature of his election was marked by the presence, with the magnates, of many commoners. On the 13th he left London by Bishopsgate with a "goodly ffeleship" to meet his rival, and on Easter Eve an end was put to the anxiety in the city by the arrival of the news of the decisive victory of Towton.

With Towton and its grim consequences this book has not to do. Edward, having by dint of slaughter in battle, executions and bills of attainder, made a clean sweep of the House of Lancaster and its supporters, returned in triumph to London. On June 26 he reached Lambeth, and on the following day was escorted in procession to the Tower by the Mayor, Aldermen and Commons: the magnates clothed in red and the commoners in green. The crowning in Westminster Abbey took place on the 28th, and on the 29th he attended Mass with his crown on his head: and next day did the same in St Paul's, and then the "Aungell cam downe and sensed hym"—meaning, one supposes,

that by mechanical means the figure of the angel was made to hover over the King's head and envelop him in a cloud of fragrant vapour. It was a somewhat puerile piece of pageantry no doubt, but the vast crowd of Londoners who filled their cathedral were full of joyful anticipation, hoping that an end had come of the long years of trouble and anarchy, with the consequent hindrance to trade.

But there were grim reminders of what victory meant in those violent days, for early in 1462 there was a whole series of executions on Tower Hill, including the Earl of Oxford, his brother, and other supporters of the lost cause. But, except for the despairing efforts of Margaret in the north with French and Scottish help, the land seemed to be at peace, and London no doubt felt the effects of something like orderly rule. The tall and handsome young King—he was only nineteen—made himself extremely popular in London, and if he were too familiar with the possessors of pretty faces in the city, that was overlooked or condoned. London lent him money on various occasions and, when he returned in February 1463 from his final conquest of the north, the citizens gave him a magnificent reception on the river, escorting him in their decorated barges with all possible pomp and circumstance.

There were, however, notwithstanding these favourable features of the outlook, certain matters which gave rise to a feeling of insecurity. Edward's favour to London was partly dictated by the unpleasant fact that his first subject, Richard, Earl of Warwick, "the Kingmaker," was enormously powerful. Edward was not, perhaps, ungrateful: Warwick and his brothers were loaded with honours and riches, but the King did not relish being under their dictation. He was dissolute and luxurious, but also able and brave, and, with all his faults, he presently came to recognise that it was better

to be King of England than lord of a faction. Therefore he began to conciliate the remnant of the Lancastrians, and, in 1464, took to wife a young widow, Elizabeth Lady Grey, whose husband had been a supporter of the fallen dynasty. This marriage with the mere widow of a knight greatly annoyed Warwick, whose policy it was to bring about an alliance with France by wedding Edward to one of the daughters of Louis XI., and his sister Margaret to one of the French King's brothers. All this was upset by Edward's action, and when he followed it up by betrothing Margaret to Charles the Bold, Duke of Burgundy, in 1468, Warwick became furious. London, on the other hand, was delighted, seeing in the alliance many opportunities for improved trade with Charles's wealthy Low Country dominions.

Outwardly Edward's prospects seemed bright enough, and his position was further assured by the capture of the ex-king, Henry VI., who for years had been living in hiding in the north. He was discovered in 1465, brought to London and lodged in the Tower, as a state prisoner. He was kindly treated, and there seems to have been not the slightest intention of using violence towards the harmless man. Edward could be absolutely ruthless at need, but at present there seemed to be no need for harshness.

Edward also had many troubles elsewhere. He seems honestly to have wished to do justice between man and man, but he lacked the power to coerce his more powerful followers. John Paston, in his endeavour to acquire the property which had been left to him by Fastolfe, was thrice imprisoned in the Fleet, and the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk repeatedly seized one or another of his manors in Norfolk. The former besieged Caister Castle in 1469 with 3000 men and captured it in defiance of all law. This was, however, during the anarchy of 1468-70, to which allusion will presently be made.

The differences between King Edward and Warwick became pronounced in 1467, when "the Kingmaker" became aware of the negotiations for the marriage of Princess Margaret with Charles of Burgundy. London saw a great deal of these negotiations, which were diversified with festivities and tournaments, in one of which the Burgundian envoy, Charles's natural brother Anthony, ran courses with Anthony, Lord Scales, brother-in-law of Edward. The London chroniclers proudly declare that the "Englisshemen" "had the *worship*"[1] in these encounters. Behind all this brilliance loomed once more the shadow of civil war: the King had openly broken with Warwick by dismissing his brother George, Archbishop of York, from his post as Chancellor, and he had quarrelled with his own unstable brother George, Duke of Clarence. Warwick won over Clarence and, in 1469, organised a revolt in the north, as the result of which Edward was taken prisoner and brought to London, but having no one to put in his place, Warwick left him practically free. The natural corollary of this anomalous situation was the outbreak of private war in many quarters. The one positive result was in the King's favour, for Warwick lost his reputation for steady loyalty to his monarch. The Queen's father and one of her brothers, as well as other lords, were put to death.

Edward, probably astonished that he was not himself assassinated, bided his time and, early in 1470, caught Warwick and Clarence off their guard and fairly scared them out of the realm. Thereupon "the Kingmaker" fled to France, made an alliance with the exiled Queen Margaret, swore allegiance to his old master, Henry VI., and, in September of the same year, landed at Dartmouth. The Lancastrian West gathered to his standard; Kent, where the Nevilles were extremely popular, rose in revolt, and the insurgents entered London without

[1] Worth-ship.

resistance. It seems that the suddenness of the affair accounted for this extraordinary success. The King was at York almost without troops, and had no alternative but to flee oversea to Charles of Burgundy. His wife and many of his adherents, including the savage (and cultivated) Constable, John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, were in London. Queen Elizabeth and others went into sanctuary. The Tower was surrendered on October 12, and the whole city was in Warwick's hands without a blow, except for some trifling offences committed by the incoming insurgents upon the "Dowchemen" and the beershops—offences in which thirst probably counted for as much as any desire of violence, of which indeed there was little.[1]

The one victim of the revolution was the unspeakable Tiptoft, "the Butcher of England," who was captured in hiding, and after a week's confinement condemned to death. He could expect no mercy, and certainly deserved none. He was brought on foot from Westminster through the city to his death, but such was the fury of the people that his guards were fain to take him into the Fleet Prison and delay the execution of the sentence until the next day. It would be interesting if one could obtain some idea of what passed in the thoughts of this highly-cultured ruffian during the last hours of his life. The honest Caxton remembered him only as a patron of literature, and it is strange to read his appreciation of a coldly cruel man who delighted in inflicting death by such unspeakable and un-English tortures as impalement: "there flowered in virtue and cunning none like him among the lords of the temporalty in science and moral virtue!"

King Henry was released from the Tower and splendidly lodged in the Bishop of London's Palace, where Warwick, as Regent, also took up his abode.

[1] *Chron. of London, Vitellius*, Kingsford, pp. 181-2.

There is some reason to think that the restoration found considerable support in the city. Edward had annoyed it by sundry arbitrary infringements of private rights, among which was counted his persecution of Alderman Sir Thomas Cooke, who had a difference with the Queen's relations the Woodvilles. At the city elections, John Stockton was chosen Mayor, but he was a Yorkist at heart, and either fell ill with anxiety or malingered while Cooke assumed his duties.[1] There was division everywhere: the Lancastrians distrusted Warwick and Warwick did not feel very much at his ease among them, while Queen Margaret with her son tarried in France.

In the midst of the suspense came, in April 1471, the news that King Edward had landed in Yorkshire and was audaciously pushing southward, evading Warwick and his brother Montague, who had gone to meet him. Rallying his partisans from every side, he reached London on April 11. It at once became evident that the city's heart was with him. Warwick was absent: London was in the hands of its own people. Archbishop Neville in vain paraded poor Henry VI. through the streets to appeal for support: the citizens were sullen: and Urswyk, the Recorder, opened the gates, though Warkworth says that the lower classes would have resisted—which seems very doubtful.[2] Edward entered unopposed, and rode straight to the palace (of the bishop) where he found Henry VI. almost alone, for he was "a goostly and a good man and set litell by worldly maters."[3] The unfortunate ex-King can have had no hope that he would be suffered to live, and yet it does not seem that, even now, Edward had any intention of imbruing his hands in the old man's[4] blood: certainly he did not kill him out of hand.

[1] Fabyan's *Chron.*, p. 660. [2] Warkworth, p. 15.
[3] *Chron. of London, Vitellius*, Kingsford, p. 184.
[4] Henry was barely fifty, but he was prematurely worn out and senile.

Two days later, having recruited his small army, Edward marched out of London, taking Henry with him as a precaution, to encounter Warwick, who was advancing from the north to recover the city. On Easter Day, April 14, the two hosts met at Barnet, and Edward gained a decisive victory. The great "Kingmaker" and his brother, Lord Montague, both fell. In Warwick's ranks fought the two Pastons, Sir John and his brother John II., of whom the latter was wounded. Both were lucky to escape not only with their lives, but, thanks to friends on the victorious side, with some expectations of future prosperity which were eventually fulfilled. Both had hopes that the arrival of Queen Margaret from the Continent would yet restore the House of Lancaster.[1]

Edward came back from Barnet to London on the same day. In his train was his helpless rival, still, to all appearance, kindly treated, and wearing a long blue velvet gown. The victor attended a thanksgiving service in St Paul's, and rode on to Westminster. Henry was relegated to the Tower as before. The hopes of the Pastons were not to be realised. Edward left London with little delay to meet Margaret, and, on May 3, cut the last Lancastrian army to pieces at Tewkesbury.

But while Edward was absent in the west, London was in great danger. Thomas Fauconberg, commonly called the Bastard of Falconbridge, a natural son of one of the Nevilles, held the post of Vice-Admiral in the Channel. Rendered desperate by the death of his patron, he determined to strike at London behind Edward's back. He had kept together a considerable squadron, and this he brought up the Thames, while the men of Kent and Essex, who were devoted to the memory of Warwick, mustered in great force. On May 8 Fauconberg wrote from Sittingbourne, stating that he

[1] *Paston Letters*, 668, 670.

A Bird's-eye View of London Bridg

Although this drawing of the bridge was made in the middle of the 16th century, and there appearance of the famous structure in the latter years of the Middle Ages. One is looking north the tower of the Church of St Magnus the Martyr. The gatehouse with the heads of traitors u

(*From the drawing by An*

E OF ITS MOST PICTURESQUE PHASES.

le later than the close of the mediaeval period, there is every reason to regard it as giving the general
h St Olave's Church (Tooley Street) on the right and above it, at the northern end of the bridge,
hown prominently a few arches to the south of the Chapel of St Thomas.

n der Wyngaerde, c. 1550.)

had taken arms in defence of Henry VI. against the "false usurper" Edward, and demanded permission to pass through the city to the west, undertaking to restrain his followers from doing any mischief. To this the Mayor and Aldermen returned an answer next day, declaring that they intended to hold London for King Edward. To defiance they added friendly counsel, assuring him that not only was Warwick, whom he supposed still alive, dead, but that they had authentic tidings from eye-witnesses of the Lancastrian overthrow at Tewkesbury.[1] Therefore they invited him to forsake his allegiance to a lost cause, and promised that, in such a case they would intercede in his favour with Edward. Having despatched this reply, Mayor Stokton and his assistants set to work to organise the resistance.

The defence was weakest on the river side. The Bastard brought up his ships and ranged them between the Tower and the bridge. The main body of the insurgents occupied Southwark, while a force of several thousand men threatened the eastern front of the city between Bishopsgate and Aldgate. On Sunday, May 12, an attack was made on the bridge. It was repulsed, but two days later the rebels delivered a general assault on both fronts. It seems to have been a very fierce engagement; and the slaughter was heavy. The Bastard's ships bombarded the bridge and the river front, while, in reply, the citizens kept up a vigorous cannonade, and opposed a sturdy resistance at all points of conflict. At the bridge the defence was directed by Alderman Sir Ralph Jocelin, K.C.B., while Urswyk the Recorder was responsible for the eastern front.

The buildings on the bridge were fired in the struggle, and some sixty houses perished. But at all points the stout citizens won the day, and when the ardour of the rebels slackened, the Londoners sallied forth from the

[1] *Journal*, 8, folios 4 b–6 b; Letter Book L, folio 78.

THE EARLIEST KNOWN DRAWING OF LONDON—probably *circa* 1475-1500.

The portion of this skilfully executed illumination showing London Bridge has been cut from the rest of the picture and enlarged in order that the details of the bridge and the buildings in the background may be as clear as possible. On the left is the Bridge Chapel dedicated to St Thomas of Canterbury, on the right is the Customs House, and in the foreground the Tower. The churches in the background, although showing very marked individuality, are not recognisable. Perhaps that in the centre is St Michael, Paternoster.

gates and pursued them vigorously, slaughtering them by hundreds, and taking many prisoners, who were forced to ransom themselves "like ffrenshemen" before they obtained freedom. The loss would have been greater but for the cannonade from the ships, which covered, to some extent, the disastrous retreat: but Fauconberg's tumultuary army was completely broken.[1]

Many citizens distinguished themselves in the fight, amongst others Robert Basset, afterwards Alderman of Aldgate Ward and Mayor in 1475, as well as the doughty Recorder and Sir Ralph Jocelin. The city was no more troubled by Fauconberg. His levies disbanded, and after some more or less purposeless brigandage in the south, he was captured and beheaded, and his head set upon London Bridge "lokyng into Kent warde."[2]

Seven days after this victory, King Edward entered his faithful city in triumph, to reign for the rest of his life unquestioned King of England; and that night his unhappy rival ended his life, murdered, as was believed, by Edward's brother, Richard of Gloucester. There is no doubt that Richard was present in the Tower at the time of Henry's death, and he has almost universally been credited with the very black deed of assassinating a harmless, half-witted, utterly worn out and prematurely aged man, who had once been King of England. There are actually reasons for thinking that Henry's death may have been due to natural causes. In April he was undoubtedly ill and weak,[3] and the fact that he had been hurried about in the trains of Archbishop Neville and Edward can hardly have improved his health. Edward might easily have put an end to his

[1] *Chron. of London, Vitellius*, Kingsford, p. 185; Fabyan, p. 662; Holinshed, III. 323; Warwark, p. 19.

[2] *Paston Letters*, 676.

[3] Warkworth's *Chronicle* (Camden Society), p. 15.

life at any time between 1465 and 1470, and again in 1471. Yet, as has been seen, he showed no disposition to do so: his very action in taking Henry with him to Barnet seems to indicate a desire of keeping personal watch over his safety: it would have been perfectly easy to have assassinated him quietly. Now when all danger is past and the Lancastrian party, for the time,

THE ALABASTER EFFIGIES OF SIR JOHN CROSBY AND AGNES HIS FIRST WIFE.

On their great table tomb in the Church of St Helen, Bishopsgate. Sir John was probably the builder of the splendid house, the hall of which survives to-day, although removed to Chelsea. He died in 1476.

crushed out of existence, Duke Richard goes out of his way to murder a more than ever harmless old man! At the same time, be it noted, the ex-Queen Margaret, lately very dangerous, and still capable of being so, is not by any means harmed, but allowed to live in more or less honourable and comfortable internment until ransomed some years later by Louis XI. of France. In fact, the murder of Henry at such a time, while his much more dangerous wife was spared, is not easily explicable. There is fair reason for believing that he died a natural death—always admitting that King Edward and his brothers were not men to stick at such a trifle as assassination if they considered it necessary.

The point is that the assassination of poor Henry was not in the least necessary.[1]

The body of the ex-King was brought from the Tower to St Paul's, where it lay in state until next day when it was taken to Chertsey Abbey and there interred.

Edward was not slow or illiberal in rewarding his stout supporters of London. The Mayor and Recorder, with eleven Aldermen, were knighted, and later Urswyk became a Baron of the Exchequer. The list of Aldermen then honoured includes the names of Sir John Crosby, the hall of whose splendid house still survives, and of seven who had either occupied, or were to occupy, the mayoral seat. The city was so well pleased with its gallant Recorder that it voted him a pipe of wine annually for the term of his life.[2]

During the next few years the chroniclers record little concerning London. The most notable entry is one in 1475 to the effect that a "Lollor" named John Goose was burnt on Tower Hill: it is plain that seventy years of steady persecution had not extirpated the sect.

In the same year Edward made up his mind to invade France, and since the subsidies voted by Parliament did not suffice for the equipment of the large army which he raised, he made personal application to the individual citizens for loans or benevolences in order to recruit his war finances. His application was highly successful: the Mayor, Robert Drope, subscribed £30; the Aldermen from £10 to £13 apiece; and most of the merchants £4, 11s. 3d., *i.e.* the pay of a soldier for six months at 6d. a day.

On July 4 the King rode through the city in state on his way to the coast escorted by the Companies in full array; and on September 28, he returned without any

[1] Certain evidence suggesting a violent end has, however, been disclosed by an examination of Henry's remains—see *Archæologia* LXII.

[2] *Journal*, 7, folio 246.

military glory, but with heavily laden treasure chests, 15,000 pounds paid down and an agreement that he should receive £10,000 a year for the rest of his life or so long as Louis XI. should live. Both sides seem to have been well satisfied. Louis was glad to get rid of the dangerous English army for a sum which was far less than the cost of a campaign, while Edward could flatter himself with the thought that the King of France had become his tributary. London also was well pleased, seeing the prompt repayment of her subscription, and Edward was escorted into the city by a great procession of citizens: the Mayor and Aldermen in scarlet, the Commoners in "murrey" (mulberry-coloured).

An event of vastly greater importance for London and humanity as a whole than this spectacular entry occurred very shortly afterwards when William Caxton severed his partnership with Colard Mansion at Bruges, and set up his own printing press at the Sign of the Red Pale at Westminster. The King and his lords at once showed their interest in the new enterprise and Caxton's first dated book (1477) was *The Dicts or Sayengis of the Philosophres*, a translation by Lord Rivers, Queen Elizabeth's brother; but from the beginning Caxton was a prolific producer of printed books of every kind, from religious service books and works on history to the poetry of Chaucer and others. He was an editor and translator as well as a compiler, and did a work of enormous importance in beginning to standardise the written language of England which had been hitherto at the mercy of individual fancy and still more of local dialect.

Caxton found himself confronted by the greatest difficulty in endeavouring to strike a medium between the half-French conversational English of the upper classes and the many local dialects of the country. He notes the case of a mercer—apparently a Londoner—who

chanced to land on Thanet and ordered some eggs for a meal. The "good wife" told him that she did not understand his "French," and matters remained at a deadlock until a member of the ship's company came to his help by substituting for "eggs" the old Kentish word "eyren." The great printer makes the comment: "Common English that is spoken in one shire varieth from another . . . much." When, in the fifteenth century, the spoken language of the capital was so enormously different from that of the province which lay at its very gates, the absurdity of imagining that, in the seventh century, there was, as some have endeavoured to assert, a homogeneous English tongue throughout the land, becomes very obvious.

Two years after the Treaty of Picquigny (1477-8), the Mayor was Sir Ralph Jocelin, who signalised his year of office by commencing to rebuild, for the last time, the venerable city walls which had been raised eleven centuries before. He persuaded the city to make a grant, raised by a tax of 5d. per head every week; and by his personal influence, inspired the Companies with such enthusiasm for the work that each undertook to restore a particular length of the wall. His own sector was that between All Hallows-on-the-Wall and Bishopsgate.[1] His successor, Humphrey Heyford, carried on the work, but, being an old and sickly man, with less energy, so that the restoration was not completely executed. Early next year, on February 18, 1478, London heard the news that the King's unstable and troublesome brother, George of Clarence, had met his end in the Tower—another deed popularly ascribed to Richard of Gloucester. It is fairly certain that Richard was against violent measures, although he had little cause to love his brother: in any case, "false, fickle, fleeting Clarence" died. The city chronicler (Cottonian

[1] *Chron. of London, Vitellius*, Kingsford, p. 187.

MS., *Vitellius*, A, XVI.) notes in the margin the popular belief: "Drowned in Malvesay."

The principal event in the succeeding year was a severe outbreak of the plague, which continued for nearly twelve months. In 1481 Edward, who was short of money, applied for a loan of 5000 marks. It was punctually repaid in the following year, and Edward testified his sense of the obligation by inviting the Mayor, William Haryot; the Aldermen, and a number of citizens to a hunt and banquet in Waltham Forest. All were delighted with the entertainment and the hunt, of which the quarry, in red and fallow deer, was largely presented to the Londoners. In order that the ladies should not be robbed of their share of the spoils, the King sent "the Mayres and her Sisters ij hertis and vj Bukkis, and a Tun of Wyne to make theym mery with, which was etyn in Drapers Hall." One gathers that the Mayoress and her friends sat down to their repast without any men being present.

The merry-making in Waltham Forest was one of the last of those of Edward IV.; certainly the last in which he entertained the good citizens of London, for he died on April 9 in the next year (1483). He was only forty-one, but his dissolute life during his later years had worn out his strong constitution. There is no doubt that, though he had some unamiable characteristics, he was a popular monarch: he was easy of access, affable and humorous: nor can it be denied that his government was fairly efficient. If he occasionally asked for loans of cash he repaid them promptly, and his *liaisons* with attractive London women were not severely judged in those lax days. The most celebrated of these royal fancies was the unfortunate Jane Shore, who very shortly after her lover's death paid heavily for her complaisance.

It was certain that Edward's demise would lead to

strife over the succession. He left two sons, Edward, twelve years of age, and Richard, who was only nine. The cause of Edward V. was supported by his mother's relations, the unpopular Woodvilles and also by Lord Hastings, the Chamberlain, who had been the intimate of the late King. But there was to be considered the strong and able Richard of Gloucester, who had, for ten years, been his brother's right hand and loyal assistant. Richard was a tried warrior and a good administrator, open-handed, a loyal brother, an affectionate son, a firm friend, cultivated, a passionate lover of music, ruthless as all his race could be, yet at times strangely gentle and merciful. He was, in 1483, in the prime of manhood, only thirty-one years of age, somewhat slight, though strong and active, with a handsome, intellectual face. Of all men he was the last who would have been suspected of a violent attempt to overthrow the existing order. It is fair to remember that he may have had worthier motives than mere selfish ambition: his own life would not have been very safe had the guardianship of the boy-king been assumed by the Woodvilles. They hated and feared Richard, and were themselves thoroughly unpopular on account of their greed and *parvenu* airs. Lord Hastings, though loyal to the son of his master, detested them.

Richard, who was viceroy of the north, therefore collected a force, intercepted the Woodvilles at Stony Stratford, as they were escorting Edward V. to London, and assumed the guardianship himself. On May 4 there was a stately entry into London. The Mayor and principal citizens met the royal procession at Hornsey and escorted it into the city: it was noted that while the little King was royally robed in blue velvet, Richard wore sombre black like a mourner.

A brief period of subterranean intrigue followed. By

the aid of Hastings, Richard was appointed Protector, a proceeding which frightened the Queen-Mother Elizabeth into taking sanctuary at Westminster with her younger son and daughter. In spite of this, there seemed no reason to suspect any sinister intentions on the part of the Protector. The late King's Council were, for the most part, retained in office : all seemed to proceed smoothly ; and preparations for the coronation of Edward were pushed forward.[1] It was fixed for June 22.

Hastings, in his fear and dislike of the *parvenu* Woodvilles, had co-operated with Richard so far : but he now began to suspect that the able prince was aiming at the crown. The truth is not certainly known—most of the accounts of these obscure proceedings come through the medium of Richard's enemies. Rivalry between Hastings and himself was almost inevitable. Hastings had been the bosom friend and prime minister of Edward IV., and not improbably hoped to exercise equal influence during the minority of his son. He was a man of loose life, like his master, and had taken over the latter's mistress, Jane Shore. Possibly this action bred dislike in the mind of Richard, who, in spite of one escapade in youth, was less lax in morals than his brother. In any case, it is clear that dissension soon began to appear at the council table. Richard's friends, apparently, did not hide their opinion that the rule of a strong king was preferable to the weakness and disorder of a minority. They were headed by Henry, Duke of Buckingham, who was, on the female side, connected with the royal house. Hastings, partly from personal feelings, partly out of loyalty to his late master's son, was not disposed to acquiesce in his supercession in favour of Richard. Therefore, tension grew more and more acute. The Londoners, as a whole, were quietly acquiescent in the regular succession, but

[1] *Journal*, 9, folio 21 b.

MEDIAEVAL SPURS, HORSE FURNITURE, AND WEAPONS.

1. Finely preserved pointed shoe (early 15th century) with very long spur necessary when horse armour was in use. 2 and 3. Spurs of the 13th and 14th centuries. 4. Stirrup of the Viking period. 5. Dagger (date 13th century) found in Lothbury. 6. Dagger-knife (13th century) found in Surrey. 7. Dagger (*circa* 1470) found in London. 8. Sword (*circa* 1390) found on site of Houses of Parliament. 9. Sword (15th century) found in London. 10. Bit found at Westminster. 11. Viking Bit of iron and bronze found in Moorfields. 12. Prick Spur found in Moorfields. Above 9. Knife inscribed I.H.C.N.R.I. and maker's mark, found at Brook's Wharf.

(*London Museum.*)

some at least of the magnates, with the Mayor, Sir Edmund Shaa (Shaw), at their head, thought of the troubled minority of Henry VI. and favoured the cause of Richard.

Exactly what was going on behind the scenes will never be known. It cannot be said with any certainty whether or not Hastings and his supporters were preparing for an appeal to arms. It is perfectly probable: it is equally probable that the Protector was really justified in sending for aid, though, if credence is to be given to the accounts circulated after his death, the whole proceedings constituted a deep-laid plot on his part. In any case, he sent Sir Richard Ratcliffe to summon troops from the north, where he was much beloved. Meanwhile, there was a plain schism in the Council; Hastings and his adherents meeting at St Paul's, while the Protector's party assembled at Crosby House. If the stones of the beautiful hall could speak, the problem might be solved. As it is, all is uncertainty up to June 13, when Richard struck with deadly suddenness.

On the morning of that day the full Council was assembled in the Tower, when the Protector strode in with a frown on his face. After a few words, he suddenly pulled up his left sleeve and showing his arm, which was somewhat shorter than the other, declared in a voice of thunder that the Queen-Mother was practising witchcraft against him together with Jane Shore. It was a direct attack on Hastings, who was taken completely aback.

"They deserve to be severely punished," he faltered, "if they have so offended."

"What!" shouted Richard, "dost thou bandy words with me, with thy 'ifs' and 'ands'? You are the chief abettor of that witch Shore! You are yourself a traitor! And I swear by St Paul that I will not dine

before your head be brought me."[1] He struck his hand on the board and his Northern men-at-arms tramped in and seized the once all-powerful Chamberlain, who was hustled down to the courtyard and beheaded with cruel haste on a log of wood, being barely allowed time to make a last confession to a priest who chanced to be near at hand. Lord Stanley, his chief supporter; Morton, Bishop of Ely; and the Archbishop of York were also arrested, but not slain, though Stanley had a narrow escape from an axe-blow aimed at him by an excited man-at-arms. In a space of time to be reckoned by minutes all was over, and Richard was master of the situation.

The blow was followed up. Richard began, with the help of Buckingham, by performing a comedy. A message was sent to the Mayor and Corporation, and when they appeared they found the Protector and the Duke wearing rusty armour as if, their lives being threatened, they had been forced to protect their bodies with anything which was at hand. Richard explained that they had narrowly escaped from a dangerous plot. This was a beginning. On June 22, the day on which the coronation was to have taken place, the Mayor's brother, Dr Shaa, preached a political sermon at St Paul's Cross. His text was: "The imperfect branches shall be broken off, their fruit unprofitable."[2] and the theme of his discourse was the illegitimacy of the young King and his brother. Edward IV. and his brother Clarence were also illegitimate; Richard of Gloucester only was truly born in wedlock; therefore, he was rightful King of England. He made the point that Richard strongly resembled his father, whereas Edward and Clarence, with their handsome effeminate faces, were quite unlike him. The citizens listened, but made no sign.

[1] Sir Thomas More, p. 496. [2] Wisdom of Solomon iv. 5.

On the Tuesday following June 24 a meeting was called in the Guildhall, and the Duke of Buckingham spoke. He dwelt on Edward IV.'s notoriously bad morals; on his exaction of benevolences; on the unlucky Jane Shore, and other matters. He was on firmer ground when he alluded to the undoubted dangers of a long minority. But though he was frequently applauded by the Northerners, who crowded the back of the hall, the citizens as a whole showed no great cordiality, and were not more responsive when the Recorder, Thomas Fitz-William, harangued them in the same strain. In the end the Duke became excited and said that, in any case, the matter rested with Parliament, not with London, although the city's consent was desirable. He then put the question directly: "Would they have Prince Richard assume the throne?" The Northerners shouted assent and their shouts were echoed by at least some of the Londoners, although naturally the biased authorities have it that they came only from a few prentice lads.

On the following day a deputation from the city waited on Richard in Baynard's Castle and begged him to accept the crown. His acceptance was a foregone conclusion, and, on the 26th, he went in state to Westminster, attended by the Mayor and crafts as well as by a train of nobles and gentlemen, and taking his seat on the throne declared himself King by election and by inheritance.

On July 6, 1483, the coronation took place at Westminster with great pomp. With Richard was crowned his wife, Anne Neville, daughter of the mighty Kingmaker, and the widow of Prince Edward, the son of Henry VI., both of whom Richard was said to have slain. It was more than two centuries since a king and queen had been crowned together. London, having decided in its mind that a strong king was better for England than a boy,

made the best of the situation and presented the new monarchs with a gift of £1000. The coronation banquet took place in *le Whitehawle*; the principal citizens performed the service of butlers, and Richard presented them with a gold cup studded with gems, to be the property of the city hereinafter.[1]

As far as his kingship was concerned there is no reason to doubt Richard's good intentions, but, as a London chronicle[2] says, "he lost the hertes of the people" by his assassination of his two little nephews in the Tower. Not only this, but the action shocked his faithful supporter Buckingham, who promptly revolted, intending to assist the rather weak claim to the throne of Henry Tudor, Earl of Richmond, the last descendant by the female side of the House of Lancaster. The revolt indeed quickly collapsed, and Buckingham was captured and beheaded, but Richard must have felt himself somewhat insecure. Yet when, on November 9, he returned to London, he was accorded a great reception. He set himself earnestly to remove bad impressions. A Parliament was called early in 1484, in which the King's confidant, Catesby, was Speaker of the House of Commons, and a number of popular acts were passed. Two especially concerned London and were welcome to the citizens. The first declared unconstitutional the practice of exacting money under the name of benevolences; while the second forbade the engagement of any foreign apprentices, and imposed certain checks upon the foreign merchants who frequented the capital.[3]

But Richard's reign was to be short. The whole of the year 1484 was more or less troubled by an undercurrent of Lancastrian intrigue, and Lancastrian agents

[1] *Journal*, 9, folios 27, 33 b, 43, 114 b.
[2] *Chron. of London, Vitellius*, Kingsford, 191.
[3] Stat. 1, Rich. III., c. 2 and c. 9.

passed to and fro negotiating and fostering disaffection. Among them was William Collingbourne, who produced the famous couplet :

> "The Rat (Ratcliffe), the Cat (Catesby), and Lovel the dog,
> Rule all England under the Hog (Richard III.)."

He was seized and executed : and the same fate befell Sir Roger Clifford, another Lancastrian agent, who was beheaded on Tower Hill. The execution was marked by a gruesome incident. He was drawn on a hurdle from Westminster through the city to his death. With him were two friars, and one of them was so much impressed by the injustice of the sentence that he determined to aid Clifford to escape. As the cortège came abreast of St Martin's-le-Grand he suddenly slipped out a knife, cut the prisoner's bonds, and bade him run for his life to the sanctuary of the church. Poor Clifford did not neglect the advice, but presumably he was numbed with the bonds and moved slowly. Before he could reach the door the guards were upon him : he was dragged back and bound once more, and so brought to Tower Hill and beheaded.[1] The fate of the plucky and pitiful monk is not recorded.

Such incidents can hardly have tended to increase Richard's popularity in London. Moreover, despite the act against benevolences, he was soon forced to ask for loans from the city—£2400 in August 1484 and £2000 in the following June, when the landing of Henry of Richmond was expected. In the former year there was a serious fire, and Leadenhall, in which was stored a large magazine of weapons, was destroyed. Whoever might be successful it behoved London to look to itself. Guns and gunpowder were bought and manufactured, and all preparations for defence duly made. They were not needed. Deserted by half his army on the field,

[1] *Chron. of London, Vitellius*, Kingsford, 192-3.

Richard III. was killed at Bosworth on August 22, 1485. Five days later his victorious rival passed into the city and, with the entry of King Henry VII., the mediaeval period of London may fitly be said to have ended.[1]

[1] *Journal*, 9, 45 b, 81 b–83 b.

CHAPTER IX

THE LAST PHASE OF MEDIAEVAL LONDON

There is no generally accepted date for the close of that period of European history which has come to be called the Middle Ages. It was common at one time to regard the year 1453, when Constantinople fell into the hands of the Turks, as the dividing point, but the tendency of historians is now less and less inclined to fix any arbitrary date, the upward progress of civilisation in Western Europe from the twelfth century onwards having been fairly steady in spite of periodic set-backs. Thus, although the end of the Wars of the Roses marked the final close of the period when the feudal baronage was able to oppose by force of arms the united will of King and Commons, yet considerably earlier society was moving forward irresistibly. The Paston Letters show that before 1450 a relatively large proportion of the population could express themselves fluently in writing, and the establishment of printing in England took place in England a decade before Henry VII. rode into London. The substitution of the operations of law for feudal violence had been steadily making progress for centuries, and private war was as rare in England as it was common in other countries of Western Europe.

One cannot take the Renaissance as a dividing line, for the Renaissance was a gradual process, and in certain aspects was very far from a rebirth, nearly everything appertaining to it having its roots in what is commonly termed "The Middle Ages."

In the case of England, a period is defined by the continuity of a great royal house which ruled the country for 330 years, and as its disappearance in 1485 occurred in the midst of a very definite process of transition, this date appears to have something tangible to recommend it.

Henry VII., more than his immediate predecessors, was a man of the Renaissance type. He was not in all respects a modern ruler, but he belonged rather more pronouncedly to the Renaissance than to the Middle Ages. Undoubtedly brave, he was more of a statesman than a knight: two years after his succession, he was menaced with a crisis something like that which had faced Richard III. in 1485. His army misbehaved just as Richard's had done at Bosworth Field: but Henry did not throw away his life as did the Plantagenet, but carried on with the faithful portion of his troops and gained a complete victory.

From the field of the victory which had made him King of England, Henry marched to London, where he arrived on August 27. At Shoreditch he was met by the Mayor and Aldermen in the pomp of office attended by all the "ffelishippys" clothed in violet. He was greeted by the Recorder, and presented with a gift of 1000 marks, after which he took up his temporary residence in the Bishop's palace.

The new reign opened unauspiciously with a brief but violent epidemic called "The Sweating Sickness." Thomas Hyll, the Mayor, died of it, and his successor, Sir William Stokker, was carried off within a few days of his election. But this ill-beginning was not followed by greater misfortunes, and though for many years the new monarch was beset by troubles, he coped successfully with them all, and died firmly seated on the throne of a peaceful and prosperous England.

London, throughout the reign of Henry VII., supported him loyally and liberally. At first the city was naturally a little anxious and distrustful of the new king's ability to hold his own, but in time this lack of confidence vanished. Money was always forthcoming when he needed it; more than once London volunteered large subscriptions of cash, its liberality being stimu-

lated by Henry's punctual repayment of the sums advanced. In 1497 there was a great alarm owing to the rebellion of the Western Counties and the invasion of Perkin Warbeck. The western rebels actually reached the vicinity of London and encamped on Blackheath: but the city stood firmly by Henry VII., manned its walls, volunteered a loan of £4000, sent its trainbands to reinforce the royal army, and made plentiful provision for the commissariat.

It was during this reign that Londoners lifted their eyes to a far wider horizon than they had ever dreamed of. In 1492 Columbus had reached the West Indies, and in the very year of Henry's final triumph over his enemies on Blackheath, a London chronicle records as follows: "This yere the kyng at the besy request and Supplicacion of a straunger Venisian [John Cabot], which by a caart [map] made hym self expert in knowyng of the world, caused the kyng to manne a ship w^t^ vytaill and other necessaries for to seche an Iland, wheryn the said Straunger Surmysed to be grete comodities; w^t^ which Ship by the kynges grace so Rygged went iij or iiij moo owte of Bristowe [Bristol], the said Straunger beying conditor of the said fllete, wheryn dyuers [divers] merchauntes, aswell of London as of Bristowe, aventured goodes and sleight merchandises."[1]

The result of this voyage of exploration was the discovery of Newfoundland and, in 1501, there is mention of the appearance of three men "clothid in Beestes skynnes, and ete Raw ffessh, and Rude in their demeanure as Beestes." Evidently they were Eskimos. Two of them at least survived and settled in London, and, according to Stow, could not be discerned from Englishmen only two years later! Thus at the very dawn of the sixteenth century, the city had evidence in a most tangible form of that new world which began to

[1] *Chron. of London, Vitellius*, Kingsford, 224.

exercise the minds of the citizens. Being essentially a commercial city and always prepared to send away its goods upon the sea, the longer voyage was not an insurmountable obstacle in the minds of merchants who conducted foreign trade. Naturally in such primitive times the rule was the longer the voyage the greater the mortality, but life was not valued quite in the same way then as it is to-day.

Although the period of transition did not show any very remarkable amount of maritime enterprise, yet English merchants and travellers were making their way to the East and laying the foundations of the trade which, during the Tudor period, produced the Company of Merchant Adventurers, the Russia Company, the Turkey Company, the Guinea Company, and, most famous of all, the East India Company.

As regards the political position of London, one sees that the strong Tudor monarchs, freed from the menace and preoccupation of a powerful baronage, held the city in greater subordination than had been possible under the Plantagenets. One finds the city authorities adopting a tone of considerable humility when confronted by the exactions and orders of the Crown, an attitude which was gradually thrown off during the reign of Elizabeth, in spite of the fact that the great Queen exacted a disproportionate amount of deference from every one.

In one respect, if not two, London continued to be in the van of the nation's progress. It was in a remarkable degree affected by the great intellectual movement commonly known as the New Learning. Thomas More, perhaps the most splendid figure in the movement, was born in Milk Street, and passed almost the whole of the seventy-seven years of his life in the city. The foundations of his education were laid by Nicholas Holt, another of the intellectual pioneers of this age. In some respects

a more famous man was Dean John Colet, who was also born in London. He was the son of Sir Henry Colet, twice Lord Mayor, is best known as the refounder of St Paul's school, and was interred in the cathedral. Yet another light of the new age, who must not be overlooked, was William Grocyn who, although not a Londoner born, was closely associated with it in the educational labours of the last fifteen years of his life. Another name which should be mentioned is that of Dr Thomas Lynacre, eminent both as scholar and physician, and the principal founder of the Royal College of Physicians.

Printing, with the consequent dissemination of knowledge; the New Learning and many other influences, some religious, some political, and one, at least, personal, gradually prepared the way for the Reformation, and, as is characteristic of England and London, this tremendous change was brought about with less violence and bloodshed than occurred in any other European country.

In itself, London, in this transitional period of about sixty years, after having held a distinctly secondary place among the great commercial cities of western Europe, began the process which, by about 1600, placed her undeniably at their head. Shortly after the accession of Queen Elizabeth, the organisation of a permanent financial headquarters in the form of "the Royal Exchange" marked the very definite assumption of its new and proud position. English ships from this time forward were to be found in every port of Europe, from venerable Constantinople to the newly established Archangel in the White Sea, and were already finding their way, close on the heels of Spaniards, Portuguese and French, to India in the East and America in the west.

Throughout the thousand years dealt with in this book, London was to a great extent confined within its Roman walls and its Roman suburbs. The population,

however, was probably not half what it had been under Honorius, for a relatively enormous area of the city was given up to the walled gardens of the numerous monasteries and large mansions of the nobles and wealthy citizens. Dr Creighton estimates that, between the reigns of Richard I. and that of Henry VII., the population fluctuated between 40,000 and 50,000, but, with the Tudor period, a definite process of expansion began. By about 1532, according to the same authority, London may have had some 62,000 inhabitants, and in another thirty years it had increased, according to estimates based on the bills of mortality, by 50 per cent., making the total about 93,000. These figures apply to London within and without the walls and the old borough of Southwark only; they exclude Westminster and the Strand, and small nuclei of population such as Kennington, St Giles's and Clerkenwell.

With the definite collapse of the power of the great feudal lords of the land, came a growing feeling that the days of armed attacks upon London were past. This gave confidence to the citizens to seek sites for new houses outside the walled area and, once a start was made, it seems clear that the expansion became rapid, so much so that, in the reign of Elizabeth, there was a feeling of alarm on the part of the cautiously minded at the rapid growth of unprotected suburbs in nearly all directions. Clearly this change marks a new period in the life of London: this sudden abandonment of the shelter of the city walls and the corresponding upward leap in population is in some degree a further justification of the choice of 1485 as the close of the mediaeval period of the English capital.

CHAPTER X

CONCERNING LONDON'S GOVERNMENT IN THE MIDDLE AGES

The government of London in the Dark Ages is for a long period lost in obscurity, and very little which is definite emerges until the eleventh century, when, in documents of the reign of Eadward the Confessor, the city is found to be under some form of municipal administration, at the head of which appear the Bishop and the Portreeve. In view of the fact that during the collapse of the Roman Imperial system one finds the bishops, from stress of sheer necessity, taking over civil and even military duties (*cf.* the cases of Anianus at Orleans, in 451, and Sidonius at Clermont Ferrand, in 473-4), it is likely enough that during the period of disorder in Britain the Bishop of London exercised, for a time, a controlling influence in the city. On the other hand, as the greatest fortress in the country, there would have been, as a matter of course, a military chief, and thus from the beginning of the reconstruction it seems probable that there was some form of dual government.

The first clear reference to a complete governing order in London during the Middle Ages is found in the famous *Judicia Civitatis Lundoniae* of the reign of Aethelstan (924-40). It is a code of regulations relating to London, which, in the preamble, distinctly states that it was drawn up by the municipality at various dates and was now codified. The municipal administration is very clearly defined as being headed by a bishop and a reeve and the free population, called "gegildas" (*i.e.* tax-payers), is classified as "eorlish" (nobility) and "ceorlish" (commons). Here is shown to exist approximately the same civic organisation as that which has persisted to the present day, that is, the governor, the aldermen or magnates, and the commons. The only constitutional

modification which has occurred is the change from the dual governorship of bishop and portreeve to a single head, entitled mayor.

There is a very general impression that the whole English political and social fabric of to-day is of Teutonic origin, and that there is a complete and unbridgeable gap between it and the system which preceded it in this island. Especially is this considered to be the case as regards London : the sheriffs, the aldermen and the gilds are all held to be essentially Teutonic. The opinion as to the Roman origin of the institutions of London is commonly associated with the name of the late Sir Laurence Gomme, and, in 1886, Mr J. E. Price had developed similar ideas.[1] He thought that the word "gild" instead of being Teutonic was a pure British noun signifying *contribution*, and derived from the verb *gildiaw*=to yield, produce or contribute. It is true, as he states, that this word is found in dictionaries of the Welsh language, but the modern philologist is inclined to take the view that it is a word loaned from Teutonic. The New English Dictionary gives no hint of any Celtic origin for "gild." The word appears to be a purely Teutonic one meaning to contribute or *yield*, and the Guildhall of London is quite commonly, in the city records and chronicles, called the Yeldhall, or, in other words, the *thesaurus* or treasury. At Reading the similar building is described in early records as the *Yieldhall*. Mr Price appears to have been wrong, for there would seem to be no ground for attributing the word to a Celtic source.

The family likeness between the idea of the gilds and the Roman *collegia opificum* is undeniable, and it might be contended that there is no obvious reason for regarding it as a mere coincidence. On the other hand some authorities are inclined to believe that there is

[1] J. E. Price, *Historical Account of the Guildhall*, pp. 24-8.

no connection whatever, and there is something to be said for the view that wherever a body of men is vitally interested in the development of some particular interest they will naturally form an association for its protection. In the terrible times which followed the downfall of the Roman Empire, the *collegia* must inevitably have become barbarised as regards nomenclature and personnel, and possibly could only survive in places of such great importance as London, Lyons or Arles.

In a general sense there is a distinct resemblance in the tenth century municipality of London to that of the ordinary Roman *colonia* or *municipium*, with its duovirs, decurions, and the mass of the population with a voice in the election of those who conducted the administration, but no direct share in it. This was characteristic of London throughout the Middle Ages, and seems in a remarkable manner to have been peculiar to the English city. Occasionally popular outbreaks occurred, and there is no doubt that the governing class was not insensible to public opinion. On the other hand few traces can be found of the huge, turbulent and unstable popular assemblies which ultimately produced the utter destruction of civic liberty in the once "free" cities of Russia, Italy, and elsewhere. A fairly good mediaeval parallel with London is to be found in Venice, with its powerful governing class, presided over by a *Dux* (=Doge), and its subservient, but contented, population, and it is worth noticing that there is no doubt of the Roman origin of the government of Venice.

Further, as has been observed by Sir Laurence Gomme, these laws drawn up in London, which seem eventually to have been promulgated throughout the realm, have no sort of resemblance to the old barbaric English customs, based upon the *maegth* or kindred of blood.[1] They are trade regulations, dealing very largely with theft. It is

[1] Amounting more or less to "right or wrong, my family."

very clear that the merchants and traders of London were making a stand against the "kindred" law, for in cap. 8 there is a clause dealing with the shielding of a brigand by this or that too-powerful *maegth*, and the methods of coercion to be employed. Indeed it seems impossible to avoid the conclusion that the old-established legal system of London found the characteristic English-Teutonic customs opposed to true equity as the Londoners understood it—especially in so far as the latter tended to the encouragement of brigandage. It was for this reason that the Londoners drew up new regulations, which were approved by King Aethelstan and his witan ("the King in Council" as would now be said), and sent forth to be proclaimed throughout the kingdom. It seems impossible to draw any other conclusion from this curious document.

The Londoners apparently gained all their points, except that the King decided that the clause which permitted any thief over twelve years of age to be killed out of hand if he resisted capture was too harsh, and raised the age to fifteen. Nine chapters give the Londonian regulations. One speaks of the conference between the Londoners and the "Witan"; the eleventh is the decree of promulgation; the twelfth details the amendments of detail made by the council. The commission representing London consisted of Bishop Theudred, who was by virtue of his rank a member of the Witan, and seems to have acted as the spokesman of his city, together with two citizens, Aelfeah Stybb and Brihtnoth Oddason.[1] One of them may have been the Reeve or Portreeve, but this is not known. All that is certain is that, together with the Bishop, they appeared at the Witana-gemot at "Thunresfeld" to consult with it upon the new regulations, which, in the interests of

[1] *Ancient Laws and Institutes of England*, 97-108; Kemble, *Saxons in England*, II. 521-7.

trade and industry, the City of London wished to have put in force throughout the realm. It is in any case clear that the Bishop was regarded as one of the governors of the city, and it is fair to assume that under the successors of Alfred, the heads of the civic administration were Bishop and Portreeve, as was certainly the case under Eadward the Confessor.[1] Whether the portreeve were appointed yearly, or held his office indefinitely, is quite uncertain; it may be fairly argued that great generals like Alfred and Eadward the Elder would not supersede a tried warrior in office at a time when war was an ever-present probability. Nothing can be said concerning the question as to whether the portreeve was or was not elected by the mass of the citizens. The probabilities are decidedly against it: when a clear view of the civic constitution of London can be obtained, it is found that the chief magistrate was chosen by the small governing body, and that the population, as a whole, had but an indirect share in the election.

It may be noted that, in the Kentish Laws of Hlothere and Eadric (673-85), there is a reference to *Lundenwic* and of a *wic-gerefa*. This would appear to indicate that (1) Kent held London, and (2) it was governed by a reeve. But the objections are of a formidable character. These two kings were weak rulers, most unlikely to have been able to control London, especially at this particular period. Also London was certainly not a "wik" (village), and it would scarcely have been so termed. It is possible that in this case "wik" may mean harbour, or

[1] In connection with this obscure question, upon which there is very little information at present, Mr Wm. Page, in his *London: its Origin and Early Development*, considers that from the time of Cnut the chief official of London was the Staller, or royal Constable. This, however, seems to miss the fact that Eadward the Confessor repeatedly refers to the Bishop and Portreeve of London without mention of the staller. The utmost which Mr Page seems to have proved is that the staller was the military commander of a group of shires and towns, including London.

(more probably) that it alludes to some outlying member of the city—say Southwark or Greenwich—which was then held by Kent and called London village or London suburb, and in which a wic-reeve was established, either for political purposes, or to watch over Kentish commercial interests. The point is obscure, for while it is just possible that at the moment when the Kentish code was promulgated the kings had some kind of suzerainty over the city, it is, on the other hand, distinctly improbable, and seems to be disproved by the curious language of one of the Laws just mentioned. It is provided that if any one of the people of Kent buy anything in the City of London, he must have two or three honest men or the King's wic-reeve present at the bargain.

Having dealt with this problem, and noted the position of London as shown in the *Judicia*, one comes to firm ground in the reign of Eadward the Confessor, when there is the clearest evidence for a dual headship of bishop and portreeve, which possibly continued unchanged under William I. and his successor. But the reign of Henry I. seems to mark the consummation of a change, which may have been in progress for some time, since the famous charter already mentioned,[1] granted to the city the privilege of electing a sheriff. The new office was more important than that of the regally appointed portreeve. It is noteworthy that from this time one loses sight of the Episcopal partner in the civic government. Very probably it was under the stern rule of William the Conqueror that the bishop was more or less effectually restricted to his ecclesiastical duties. Whatever his personal influence may have been, William's firm determination to be master in his own house must have contributed very much to the relegation of the bishop to his own sphere.

A step towards the final development of the civic con-

[1] See p. 81.

stitution of London had thus been taken. In place of the dyarchy of bishop and portreeve, there was now a single civil governor, the sheriff—nominally, though not always in practice, elected by his fellow citizens. Below him were (1) a portreeve and other assistants, whose number and duties at this period are somewhat obscure; (2) the aldermen of the wards. One sees here the elements of the governing body which presided over London during the later Middle Ages and, indeed, down to the present day.

Henry II., as has already been mentioned, somewhat restricted the liberties of London, for he kept the appointment of sheriff in his own hands. It has also been shown that the civil disturbances during the absence of Richard I. on Crusade, brought about the establishment of a fully organised system of municipal government on modern lines. The head of the civic body is now definitely termed the mayor, and below him are twelve aldermen, called by the French term of *échevins* (*skivini*). This has been held to prove that the old system was entirely superseded by a new one of French origin, probably directly copied from the communal government of Rouen: but the skivini may have been a committee of aldermen selected from those who presided over the wards, and the French nomenclature was probably simply due to the fact that the Justiciar who negotiated the arrangement was Walter de Coutances, Archbishop of Rouen.

The first citizen to hold the office of mayor was Henry Fitz-Ailwyne of "Lundenstane,"[1] who possibly owed his selection to a well-tried reputation for civic spirit. The opening of his term of office is traditionally placed in 1189, but this need not have been the case. There was at this time no question of an annual election:

[1] His house was close to London Stone, off what is now Cannon Street.

Fitz-Ailwyne occupied the chair for a quarter of a century.

By 1205-6 the civic government appears in its full development in the document called "*Sacramentum* XXIIII^{or}." The council of "skivini," which was at first distinct from the aldermen, was increased from twelve to twenty-four;[1] and in any case it appears that this body was presently either enlarged to twenty-five, or ultimately in some manner replaced by the elected aldermen of the wards. Thus, by the fourteenth century, London was ruled by a mayor, sheriffs, and twenty-five aldermen, representing the now established administrative divisions of the city.

The government of London can never be truly described as democratic in the ancient Greek sense of the word, for although at various times one hears of such phrases as *immensa communitas* or *immensa multitudo civium*, it is nearly always carefully specified that these "immense numbers" were restricted to the wealthier and more reputable citizens. It is quite true that in 1261-2 there were demagogic mayors—Thomas Fitz-Thomas and his successor in 1271–3, Walter Hervi already mentioned—who seem to have obtained power by virtue of the appeal which they made to the interests and passions of the mob. These instances belong mainly to the troubled period in the reigns of Henry III. and Edward I., when the craft gilds were struggling for recognition. There was at a very early period, as has already been noted, something in the way of a democratic movement due to the endeavour of the craftsmen as opposed to the limited aristocracy of landholders and great traders, to obtain a share in the civic government. But these craft gilds

[1] Actually, according to Mr J. H. Round's interpretation of the evidence, there were twelve *skivini* and twelve councillors as at Rouen. *Commune of London*, p. 240.

were quite as determined to keep their mere journeymen and apprentices in a position of inferiority, and this policy they steadfastly pursued when once they had taken their place on an equality with the merchant princes. By the fourteenth century, there can be no question of the restricted numbers of the city's electorate. When a loan is demanded by the King, the question is debated by "the wealthiest and most discreed persons"; and a little later "the wealthier and more reputable men," showing plainly that the dominant body was one of extremely limited numbers. The point is driven home by the conclusion of the letter in question by which this small assembly issues orders to levy the loan on "all men in the City . . . sparing no one." Elsewhere, when in 1342 the mayor John de Oxenford died, the Recorder gave orders to the sheriffs that they should summon "all the aldermen and the more wealthy and more reputable commoners of the City" to elect a new mayor.

It therefore seems clear that the government of London was conducted by "the reputable men," that is by merchants and tradesmen of a certain standing, who were regularly enrolled in the trade gilds.[1]

It is very clear that in the rebellion of Wat the Tyler "the reputable citizens" were in a position of opposition to the mob: it was the latter, supported by two or three demagogic aldermen, who opened gates to the rebels. The same phenomenon appeared in the disturbances which occurred in the reign of Edward II. The murder of Bishop Walter de Stapleton was very clearly the work of a discontented rabble who had terrorised the mayor and aldermen; it was by no means an act of popular justice, as is sometimes imagined—the bishop was merely a minister who chanced to fall into the hands of the mob. At a later date, that of Jack Cade's rebellion, the same division appears. Practically all the citizens of

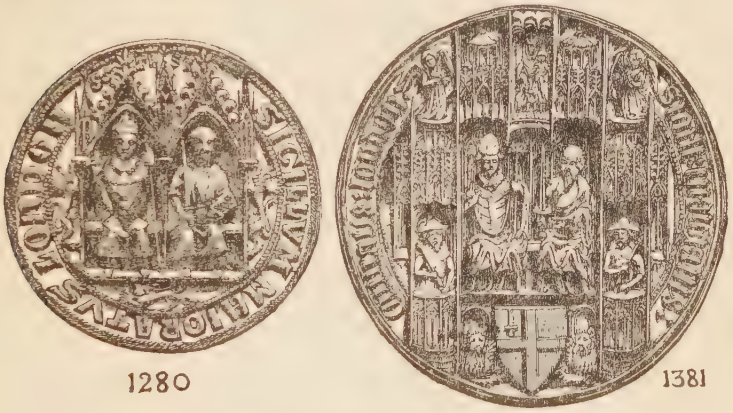
[1] See Note on p. 270.

any consequence were sympathetic with the objects of the revolt, but had no mind to admit a horde of plunderers within their midst. The gates were opened by a few malcontents, but since the rebels at first kept order the citizens took no action. As soon as they began to plunder, "the reputable men" assumed control and brought the outbreak to an end by force of arms.

To conclude, some notice should be taken of the position which the leading citizens occupied in the eyes of the country and of Europe. When government loans were raised, the mayor was assessed as an earl and the aldermen as barons, and in the *Liber Albus* it is stated that the burial of aldermen was accompanied with baronial honours. The mayor, within the city, was the other self of the King. When the King sent representatives to discuss any political measure, the mayor took precedence of all present, including archbishops and members of the royal family. He was indeed, as he is generally regarded on the Continent at the present day, a personage of the highest consequence in the world. Foreigners, as early as the reign of Richard I., were amazed at the obvious wealth and vigour of London as a community, and all this seemed to be concentrated in the mayor. When a mayor of London, not by any means the most distinguished, could without presumption entertain four kings in his private house; and when a small company of London citizens could raise a fleet from their own resources, and do defensive work which the Government had neglected, it seems unnecessary further to emphasise the facts.

The focus of the whole administration of London was the Guildhall, where the Court of Justice was held before the mayor and aldermen. Their powers seem to have been unlimited, for there is no doubt as to their being able to give capital sentences. They also undertook duties which are to-day relegated to the coroner. They

issued edicts relating to the public peace, the sanitation of the city, the paving of streets, the water supply, and the safe keeping of the walls and gates in time of emergency. They also exercised control over the public morals, and at times issued sumptuary laws. Regulation of prices, inspection of the quality of provisions and



MAYORALTY SEALS OF LONDON.

The smaller dated 1280 was replaced in 1381 by that on the right which, save for the addition of two roses, is the same as that in use to-day. The sword on the shield is generally accepted as the symbol of St Paul.

merchandise—a duty very conscientiously performed—and the internal organization of the various companies or fellowships also came within their purview. Building regulations had their attention at least as early as the first mayor. They arranged and sealed private contracts, and lastly they had the onerous task of policing a somewhat stiff-necked and hot-tempered, however fundamentally law-abiding, population. This was perhaps the duty in which the city authority was least successful, for the reason that for the purpose of enforcing their enactments there was at their disposal only a very limited power in the form of a few "sergeants." It appears that each ward has its sergeant, and this, allowing for a certain

number at the Guildhall, would give a total of perhaps forty or fifty police officers for a community of about 40,000 to 50,000 souls. It is worth remembering that where a population, especially one belonging to the not very elevated stage of civilisation reached during the Middle Ages, was rather closely packed together, the tendency to quarrels resulting in bloodshed was considerable. Under such conditions one representative of the law to 1000 persons could hardly be expected to be effective, and in fact, until the institution of the Metropolitan Police by Sir Robert Peel in 1828, order was very inefficiently kept in London.

The city records give evidence of every description of crime, from murder to petty theft. Insulting or assaulting a city dignitary was a very serious crime; an attack on the Mayor on one occasion was capitally punished. An offence which no longer appears in the police records was witchcraft, which was frequently punished with death, as were sacrilege, rape and burglary. Forgery, which might be expected in a city so full of business affairs, was a frequently discovered crime. In the earlier records of England one hears often of falsifying the coinage. The Jews were said to have been the principal culprits, and this may actually have been the case, for, after their banishment, it is not easy to find a case in the London records. Perhaps the commonest offences were those connected with retail trade, such as adulteration, false weighing, and exposure for sale of articles of food unfit for human consumption, as well as manufacturing goods below the standard laid down by the city regulations. In such cases the suspected articles were carefully examined by a committee of qualified makers of the class of goods concerned.

Apart from the death penalty, the punishment meted out was most commonly public exposure in the pillory, with some mark of ignominy slung round the neck. If

the crime were selling bad food, it was burnt under the offender's nose, or, as in one case already noted in these pages, the delinquent was drenched with his own sour wine. Women were exposed in what was called a "thewe." In more serious cases, to the pillory was added imprisonment up to a year and a day, but seldom longer, although there are cases of imprisonment at the pleasure

PUNISHMENT OF A DEFRAUDING BAKER.
He is shown being drawn on a hurdle by horses.
(*From a Guildhall MS.*)

of the Corporation. The punishment meted out to prostitutes has already been noticed;[1] they were taken through the streets in carts. Scolds were not ducked as at a later time, but exposed in the "thewe." A variation of the pillory was to drag the malefactor through the city on a hurdle. Mutilation, so common in the Tudor period, does not appear to have been very much resorted to in the Middle Ages in London, but there are cases of men losing their right hands for rescuing prisoners from the hands of justice.

The dignity of the mayor and aldermen was carefully guarded, and insults to them were punished with great severity—on paper. In 1382 a fishmonger named Filiol,

[1] See p. 198.

for slandering John of Northampton, then mayor, was sentenced to a year's imprisonment in the Bocardo[1] in Newgate. This may have been a peculiarly foul den in the prison. There were at least two cases of insults to aldermen in 1388, one by a certain Robert Staffertone, the other by a butcher named Richard Bole. Both were sentenced to imprisonment and public penance through the streets carrying a wax taper with, in Bole's case, the additional disgrace of being bare-legged and bare-footed. But the authorities were placable enough, for in each one of these three cases, the imprisonment in pestilential Newgate was remitted on the offender's duly apologising and giving surety for good behaviour. It is a notable fact that Bole secured the intervention of the Archbishop of Armagh, the Primate of Ireland, and "reputable" men of his trade stood for him. The offended parties themselves, it is pleasant to note, not infrequently acted the Christian part of peacemaker.

During the first part of the period dealt with in this book, capital punishment was inflicted in the form of hanging, beheading, burning, drowning, stoning and hurling from a rock. Sir Walter Besant says that in cases of drowning, the individual was sewn up in a sack with a snake, a dog, an ape and a cock—which is nothing more nor less than the Roman penalty for parricide, as established by the *Lex Pompeia de Parricidiis* (52 B.C.).

In the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, however, the most common capital punishment was hanging. Persons of noble birth were beheaded, but in cases of high treason all ranks suffered alike the hideous penalty known as hanging, drawing and quartering. The "drawing," it may be noted, is not, as often supposed, the barbarous disembowelling, but the preliminary dragging on a hurdle or a blood-stained hide, often for long distances, from the place of imprisonment to the gallows.

[1] The old prison of Oxford, in the North Gate, was also called Bocardo.

The scene of execution, at any rate during the Plantagenet period, seems usually to have been Tyburn, probably for the grimly prosaic reason that there were at that place plenty of lusty elm trees with wide-stretching arms at a convenient height from the ground. The first actual record of an execution there is of William of the Longbeard in 1196.[1] By the different chroniclers the place is called both "Tyburn" and "The Elms." Mortimer, the murderer of Edward II., was also hanged at Tyburn in 1330, and again certain chroniclers give the alternative name of "The Elms." These two names for the site of the gallows at the junction of Edgware Road and Bayswater Road (close to the present Marble Arch) are interesting, seeing that Stow makes a reference to another place called "The Elms" in Smithfield, which he says "had been *the* place of execution for offenders." This would give the impression that there were two permanent places of execution, one at Tyburn and the other at Smithfield. But it is quite certain that from the thirteenth century onwards Tyburn was the common place for execution by hanging, and Stow may have confused the matter. In 1220 two permanent gibbets were erected at Tyburn; on the other hand, executions occasionally took place elsewhere, when unusual methods were in question. Burnings for heresy were usually carried out in Smithfield as is well known, and Sir John Oldcastle, the famous Lollard rebel, was executed in St Giles's Fields. The selection of this site was due to the fact that it was there that he had summoned his gathering of Lollards four years previously. Thirty-six of them were hanged on the spot, and, when Oldcastle was captured long afterwards, he was put to death in the same place as a matter of course. This and other special circumstances do not

[1] *Ralph de Diceto*, ed. Stubbs, Vol. II. p. 143; R. Wendover, sub anno 1196; *Gervase of Canterbury*, ed. Stubbs, Vol. I. pp. 533-4.

deprive Tyburn of its gruesome pre-eminence: it is mentioned over and over again by the records in a manner which leaves no doubt of the fact.

Political executions of notable persons—or judicial murders, as they sometimes were—commonly took place on Tower Hill or, at times, within the Tower walls, on the green before the Church of St Peter-ad-Vincula, within whose walls the decapitated remains were often buried. Occasionally one finds that ordinary citizens were put to death by the more dignified method, as in the case of John Constantyn, a shoemaker, who was executed in 1384 for inciting an outbreak against Sir Nicholas Brembre: the implication seems to be that master-tradesmen of London were regarded as entitled to the privileges of gentlemen. It is true that Brembre himself at his downfall, was hanged—but this was because the crime of treason was laid upon him by his dominant persecutors.

The principal prison of London—in the sense of a house of permanent detention, was Newgate, within whose solid walls were confined those guilty of treason, felony and serious crime. It was beyond doubt a terrible den of misery: in the ordinance of 1419, by which Whittington established Ludgate as a place of confinement for debtors and "reputable" persons, mention is made of the fetid and corrupt atmosphere of the "heynouse"[1] gaol of Newgate, and it appears that the mortality among the wretched inmates was enormous. It is not surprising that, once at least, the squalid prisoners broke out into revolt and actually put up a fight against the citizens, only to be overpowered and punished by being laden with irons in addition to the customary horrors of the place. That English prisons were a scandal right down to the nineteenth century is an unfortunate fact, which contrasts with the comparative humanity of capital punishment in this country.

[1] Heinous.

Ludgate was the place of confinement for freemen of the city in debt or convicted only of minor offences. The Fleet Prison, which at a more modern period acquired so grim a celebrity, stood outside the walls, encircled by a ditch filled from the Fleet River. It was perhaps the most pestilential of all, on account of the filth which accumulated in the moat : in 1355 the state of the ditch was frightful . . . it had become completely choked with sewage, and an epidemic was raging among the prisoners.

There were several smaller lock-ups in various parts of the city, generally called " compters " or " countours." They were under the special care of the sheriff, while the greater prisons were in charge of officers appointed by the Corporation. Of these lock-ups the best known was the Tun on Cornhill, a circular structure built in 1282 by Henry le Waleys. It was obviously so called on account of its resemblance to a huge barrel, and was not in its early days a place of great strength, for in 1298 Stow mentions that a determined party of men broke into it and released the prisoners. This was a temporary place of detention in which prowling thieves, street-walkers, and other disreputable people were confined after arrest, before being brought up for summary punishment. It was here that, in 1383, John of Northampton herded the prostitutes before cutting their hair short, and parading them through London. The account of the great gale in 1439 seems to indicate that the Tun was largely constructed of huge baulks of timber.[1] On its roof was a bell, the ringing of which was the order to close the markets which were held on Cornhill. In addition to the foregoing, the other gates of the city were used as temporary lock-ups, and in this way there were, within convenient distance, places of temporary detention on three sides of the city, as well as in its centre.

Generally speaking ample attention was given to the

[1] See p. 196.

enforcement of the law, and it does not seem that many offences were left undetected or unpunished by the authorities. The weak feature of the somewhat rough and ready system was the inadequacy of the police: the strong points were (1) that the wards were small and an active alderman could do a great deal as regards personal supervision, and (2) that although exposure in the pillory may seem a light punishment, it was not so, for in a comparatively small city it meant, when trade offences were concerned, the ruin of the culprit's business reputation. There were cases in which men died of shame. If the offender's trade survived in any way, one can take it that the quality or quantity of his goods was never again likely to be deficient.

It is not within the scope of this book to include an elaborate disquisition on the varying powers and composition of the courts of the city. This might be tedious reading for the non-expert, and its proper place is in a work devoted mainly to civic institutions. The following is a brief summary of the governmental machinery of London at the beginning of the fifteenth century.

NOTE

The principal offices of London according to the *Liber Albus* were (1) the Mayor and the Sheriffs ("the eyes of the Mayor") and (2) the Aldermen. Under them were the Recorder; the Chamberlain; the Common Serjeant-at-Law, otherwise called the "Common Countor"; and the Common Clerk (now Town Clerk). An office which has vanished was the Common Hunt. These were assisted by a number of minor officials, including a Common Serjeant-at-Arms, among whose duties was that of public crier; a body of Serjeants of the Mayor and Chamberlain; a Sword Bearer; constables; scavagers (= building and sanitary inspectors); bedels; under sheriffs and clerks.

The principal tribunals of the city were (1) the Mayor's Court, consisting of the Mayor, Sheriffs, Aldermen and Recorder; (2) the Court of Common Council, and (3) the two Courts of Hustings. These last formed the County Courts for the city and were held before the Mayor, the Alderman and the Sheriffs for pleas of land, common pleas and appeals from the Sheriffs. Further, the Sheriffs had their independent courts to deal with personal pleas, and there were besides these the Wardmotes, each presided over by its Alderman. The last were in the nature of small local government boards for the appointment of the Ward officials and the regulation of its affairs.

CHAPTER XI

SOCIAL AND DOMESTIC LIFE IN MEDIAEVAL LONDON

Until the City Letter Books and other records begin to throw a bright light on the smaller affairs of London one is unable to write with any confidence of the social life of the inhabitants.

The subject suffers from the paucity of archæological materials. There is not a single remnant above ground of any dwelling of the average kind of any period in the thousand years dealt with in this book.[1] Gone also are not only the whole of the furnishings of houses, but every single piece of woodwork which can be reasonably identified as belonging to the period prior to 1485. While it may be that there still exist a few oaken chests or cupboards which may have done duty in the city in the Middle Ages, they are scattered and their origin is lost. Of clothing also very little, if any, has survived, and thus to build up pictures of domestic life before the Reformation, one is thrown back upon a few illuminations from manuscripts and the details of sepulchral monuments. Even these almost entirely belong to a very late period of the Middle Ages, and for the costume, architecture, and interiors of at least six of the ten centuries with which this book is concerned there is no material to go upon. The smaller uninflammable objects of everyday life, however, have come through the intervening ages to some extent. Pottery, the most indestructible of domestic objects, is fairly well represented, but even here no one has yet been able to place in the period to which it belongs more than a very small proportion of what the earth has given up. The same to a certain degree applies to knives, spoons,

[1] Crosby House, the hall of which still exists transplanted to Chelsea, was the palatial residence of a merchant prince of the fifteenth century.

and small metal objects of household use, and thus one is unable to describe with any precision, from objects actually existing, the appearance of the rooms of an Anglo-Saxon or a Norman house in London. For any reconstruction of social life, therefore, one is obliged to rely almost exclusively on the written records which give many glimpses of the private affairs of Londoners. In one or two instances there is actually preserved a more or less complete inventory of the household effects of an average middle-class citizen. But most of this information belongs to the fourteenth century or later.

In the face of this extreme scarcity of materials it would be idle to attempt to create a picture of domestic life in London of the pre-Plantagenet period. Beyond the fact that houses were extremely primitive, consisting as a rule of a single room with a rush-strewn floor and with unglazed windows closed with wooden shutters at night and heated by a brazier, it would be unwise to go. The better class houses were, of course, of more than one room. A feature which seems clear is the lack of chairs and larger pieces of furniture even as late as the middle of the fourteenth century.

In regard to costume, there is enough in the manuscripts and in the Bayeux Tapestry to give one a general idea of dress worn between the ninth and the twelfth centuries. In almost every instance the male attire consists of a sleeved tunic coming to the knee, a cloak of about the same length buckled on the right shoulder, stockings or puttees to below the knee, and shoes.

Social grades in London were very clearly defined and it may be said that there was an aristocracy and a commonalty, but the former was built on a business basis and not upon pride of birth. The structure of the city's society was purely civic and artificial: there is no trace within the walls of manorial rights and the principle of feudalism cannot be discovered there. But it would be

FIFTEENTH AND EARLY SIXTEENTH CENTURY SHOES FOUND IN LONDON.

Pointed toes were prevalent from the end of the 14th century, and continued well into the 15th, after which there was a reaction towards the opposite extreme shown in three of the examples given here.

(*London Museum.*)

incorrect to imagine that the London merchant was not often a person of good birth in the sense that he was frequently descended from several generations of well-educated business men of capacity and established honour. Their peculiar virility and high reputation is largely to be attributed to the fact that their ranks were continually recruited from the most enterprising types throughout the country, as may be seen from the place-names which frequently appear in the lists of city dignitaries. One finds within a period of eighty years the following names :

Winchester, Basing, Wimbledon, Cosham, Woburn, Edmonton, Coventry, Durham, Bungay, Bentley, Wimborne, Northampton, Deptford, Langley, Chigwell, Hereford, Staines, Canterbury, Amesbury, Gloucester, Dunstable.

It will be seen that nearly all parts of England are represented and, in addition, the same period reveals an appreciable stream of Continental, especially French, blood in the names Picard, Gisors, Arar (Arras), Lier (Lierre), Zouch, Montpelier and Norman. There is also Le Waleys, which clearly indicates a Welsh origin. A very definite new arrival among the merchants of London was Whittington, who hailed from Gloucestershire, and another famous mayor—in some respects the most remarkable of them all—was John Philipot, whose name is evidently French.

The connection of this most remarkable mercantile aristocracy with the country gentlemen, as instanced by the fact that a knightly family such as that of Whittington should send its youngest son to be apprenticed to a London merchant, was evidently close, and as time went on the ties were strengthened until, when the Elizabethan age is reached, one finds the merchant princes of the city founding titled families in various parts of the country.

In the Middle Ages William de la Pole, a merchant prince of Hull, founds a family which in one generation becomes one of the greatest in the land, fighting for the political ascendancy with the princes of the blood, and in four, by intermarriage with the proud house of Plantagenet itself, establishes a claim to the throne. The tendency of the aristocracy of birth to intermarry with that of commerce is quite unlike anything which can be found on the Continent, and no doubt accounts to some extent for the popularity of the baronage. A sign of the connection of the nobles with the great city is found in their establishing town houses within the walls. In an assessment list of 1319 there were in the city 4 royal princes, 6 great earls, 17 barons, 26 knights, and, in addition, 11 or more female representatives of the peerage. Besides these it may be mentioned that no less than 36 abbots from other parts of the country had their houses in the capital. It might be added that the Primate had established himself at Lambeth almost opposite the royal palace of Westminster and the bishops were already building princely residences along the Strand and in Southwark. In fact London was a true focus of every side of the national life.

So far as can be seen the business aristocracy engrossed the government and honours of the city; they were the core of the body of "freemen" who formed the strength of the population and from whose ranks they were recruited. The freemen included the mass of master craftsmen as well as sundry persons admitted for some good reason: for example, Sir Robert Knolles, the famous warrior of the time of Edward III., was a freeman of London; the reason being that it was under his direction that the defence against Wat the Tyler's rebellion was organised. The freemen were all enrolled in one or another of the companies or gilds.

Below the burghers or freemen came the large body of paid craftsmen—journeymen as they came to be called. They were, of course, free men no less than their employers, but being wage-receivers and not wage-payers were in the position of an inferior class. The master-tradesmen seem to have regarded them to some extent as a baron would look upon his serfs, and in fact many of them must have been immigrant villeins or of villein descent. Attempts at various times on the part of the journeymen to form "fraternities" or associations of their own were firmly checked.[1] It was unquestionably they who furnished support to Wat the Tyler and Jack Cade's revolts: Froissart even says that the rising of 1381 was planned in London, which is by no means impossible. Nevertheless, the workmen of the various crafts seem on the whole to have been fairly well satisfied with their lot: one does not obtain any clear impression of "labour" troubles on a large or prolonged scale.

Beside the journeymen were the apprentices, a very curious and distinctive body, in some respects almost peculiar to London. In many cases (*e.g.* Whittington) they were of good birth, diligently studying the "mystery" of the craft, with the knowledge that at the end of the seven years' term they would be able to set up in business for themselves with capital provided by their families. Therefore social distinctions were found in the body such as hardly existed among the journeymen. Of two lads apprenticed to the same employer, one might be certain of rising to the rank of a master trades-

[1] See for example Letter Book H, folios 219, 309; Letter Book I, folios 151, 201. It is amusing to note that the promoters of these "fraternities" had precisely the same mentality as the modern Communists—every one who disagreed with them went in fear of his life. But the City Fathers of London in the fourteenth-fifteenth centuries were not men to be frightened by loud language or violent deeds.

man, while the other could only become a paid assistant. It must be assumed that there were divisions and bitterness at times among them, but again nothing certain can be said on the subject. The apprentices seem to have had that sense of community which prevails among university undergraduates, or rather, perhaps, art students in the Quartier Latin of Paris: certainly they were a very active body, somewhat turbulent, fond of excitement, ready to indulge in sport and combat at short notice. They are more than once distinctly mentioned as being associated with the journeymen and other "lowse men" in riots and outbreaks. It may be supposed that these disorderly fellows belonged to the lower social stratum of the "prentice lads" class: one can hardly imagine young Dick Whittington and boys of his class associating themselves with such a body as that led by Wat the Tyler—although it is true that a man of high birth may at times profess democratic opinions and assume the part of a demagogue.

The alien element in mediaeval London was a considerable one—probably much more important both in numbers and consequence than at the present day. For over two centuries it included a large body of Jews and when they were expelled their place was, in part at least, taken by Italians—the "Caursins[1] and "Lumbards," of whom so much is heard in the chronicles and other records. The association of the traders of the Low Countries with London began at a very early epoch: it may, in fact, be said that it commenced in the Roman era, and never really ceased. In any case one finds Frisian merchants frequenting the port on the Thames in the seventh century. In the eleventh there is clear evidence of German sea-traders—"men of the Emperor"—who paid no tolls, but were "law worthy."

[1] Or Corsini.

The French element was probably still more prominent; but the tendency for the Frenchmen who settled in London was to become assimilated to the English burghers, so that they can hardly be described as a foreign residential body.

The Flemings, who were "Emperor's men," began to settle in England in the reign of Henry I., but it does not seem that at that time many of them took up their abode in London. There may have been German residents early, for the connection between England and Germany began as soon as the tenth century, and in the twelfth Henry II. wrote to Frederick Barbarossa to the effect that between the subjects of them both there should be an indivisible unity of friendship "and peace and safe trade of merchandise."[1]

Trade and settlement do not necessarily go together, but commercial transactions of any magnitude must always connote the establishment of "factories" or business offices in the places most concerned, and, in the thirteenth century, the merchants of the German Hansa were definitely permitted to establish their factory, the famous "Steelyard." The Germans seem to have confined themselves very much to its walls and not to have mixed to any extent in London society.

The Italians apparently did not shut themselves up in any special quarter, neither did the Flemings, who, in the reign of Edward III., resided in considerable numbers in London. The latter were brought over by Edward for the express purpose of improving the manufacture of the rough English woollen cloth: dyers were also introduced, so that the industry should no longer be dependent in that respect upon foreign enterprise. By 1362 these "weavers alien" were so numerous that they petitioned the Mayor and Aldermen to be organised as a company under regulations. This was done: John

[1] Hakluyt, *Voyages*, Vol. I. p. 128.

le Grutteret and Peter Vanthebrok, Flemings, and John Elias, a Brabançon, were appointed to enforce the "Articles" of incorporation. Other records refer to the dyers.[1]

The foreigners do not seem to have been unpopular in London itself, although one hears of attacks upon the Lombards, whose financial dealings, no doubt, at times produced ill-feeling—not necessarily justified. In great revolts such as that of 1381 they suffered terribly: Wat the Tyler's men massacred every foreigner whom they could find—but there is evidence only of this ignorant hatred felt by the rude peasantry for men of alien blood, and is characteristic of uncouth folk of any nation.

What was the manner of existence of the various elements of the population of mediaeval London? It was naturally very different from that led to-day by the average citizen, but only in degree. In essentials it did not vary to any great extent. The merchants and master craftsmen presided in their places of business: journeymen and apprentices worked very much as their successors work to-day: they grumbled, joked, quarrelled, "slacked," as men have always done and will do until the end of time—unless, of course, there shall arrive such a condition of things as that pictured by H. G. Wells in *The Time Machine*, when all emotions and passions are killed by the advance of civilisation.

One feature there was which does not obtain in the twentieth century: the relations between employer and employed were close. The employer worked himself at his business: the reformer, John of Northampton, was a "trustworthy draper," whose opinion on the subject of the proper treatment of cloth was valued in London. Sir William Walworth was a practical fishmonger: Sir Henry Picard probably knew all which

[1] Letter Book G, folio 93.

pertained to the manufacture and testing of good wine. Sir John Philipot, the citizen sea-warrior, was a practical grocer and, doubtless, in earlier years had taken a hand in the weighing and packing of his own spices. They knew, without the necessity of information by a middleman, whether John of Leicester or Thomas atte-Conduit was a trustworthy journeyman, or whether Hugh Chichester, the well-born apprentice, possessed "a good head for business." The apprentices lived in the houses of their employers: the journeymen were, it may be said, the retainers of the "Barons of London." Life was on a smaller scale, but, for that very reason, rather more human, at any rate more intimate, than it can be to-day. In the ward, at least, almost everybody was personally acquainted: in the city, as a whole, the personal worth of every merchant and tradesman was known to his fellows. It was not without reason that men such as Sir John Poultney, Adam Fraunceys, John Barnes, Adam Bamme, Drew Barentyne, and Richard Whittington were elected to the mayoral throne again and again.

The intimacy of society contributed much towards maintaining a high standard of personal honour and business integrity. It might seem a small thing that a fraudulent tradesman stood in the pillory for a short hour. But his humiliation was seen by every one who passed by, and by the close of the day it was known throughout the city. His reputation was ruined; it is said, as mentioned elsewhere, that men exposed, more than once died in the pillory of shame and distress.

Turning from these general considerations to the details of daily life, it is to be observed that there does not exist much information as to the mode of existence of the merchant princes — the famous "Barons of London"—of whom the city was so proud. But of the splendour in which they lived there is some slight

indication afforded by the magnificence of Crosby Hall, built by one of them towards the close of the mediaeval period, and even more by the great hall of Penshurst Place erected by Sir John de Poultney a hundred years before Sir John Crosby's edifice rose above the gabled roofs of London. Such splendid assembly halls aid one to understand how these commercial magnates could worthily entertain kings and queens. Edward III. might go to Sir Henry Picard's house with some desire of flattering his good citizens of London, but he would also go with the full knowledge that he was to be most lavishly and royally entertained. Dwellings such as those of Picard, Philipot, and others were probably quite equal in architectural pretensions to those of the average noble, and, with certainty, more richly and comfortably furnished.

CROSBY HALL.

The only surviving great mediaeval house of London. The drawing shows it as it appears at Chelsea where it was rebuilt in 1909. An effort to preserve the splendidly roofed structure on its original site failed through the apathy of the City.

(*From the drawing by Mr Walter H. Godfrey, S.S.A.*)

The average Londoner, of what would now be styled the middle class, also was by no means meanly lodged. The specification of a house to be built for William de Hanigtone, a pelterer, in 1307, shows that considerable attention was being given to comfort and privacy. The

DOMESTIC OBJECTS OF THE MIDDLE AGES FOUND IN LONDON.

1 and 2. Bone game pieces found at Finsbury, Moorgate, and elsewhere. 3. Bronze dish from Moorgate Street, 10th-11th century. 4. Bronze cooking-pot found in the Thames. 5. Brass dish, 15th century. 6. Iron jug on tripod. 7. Iron crucifix. 8. Bronze jug with spout. 9. Two lanthorns of bronze, *c.* 15th century. 10 and 11. Double and single combs. 12. An inkpot. 14. Wrought iron alms box with royal arms. 15. 14th century bronze door knocker from Thames Street. 16. Chalice of Latten. 17. Leather jack.

(*London Museum.*)

principal apartment is still the hall. Beneath it are cellars, and opening into it a kitchen, larder, and other offices. There is also a stable. But beside these there are three rooms, perhaps four, devoted to what may be called family purposes, including a sitting-room with a fire-place. There seems to be provision also for the accommodation of the servants. The specification is not for an entirely new house, but for large additions to be made to an old one, which apparently contained only two principal rooms: it may have been the original abode of William de Hanigtone before he prospered sufficiently to build himself a dwelling of some pretensions. The house was built by a carpenter, and was consequently of timber and plaster work, but it was very distinctly a house—not by any means a cottage. When complete it appears to have comprised seven residential apartments, kitchen and larder, two cellars, and a stable. Not perhaps a very imposing abode, but certainly one far removed from meanness and discomfort.[1]

The bulk of the "commonalty," doubtless, dwelt in much more modest homes, probably consisting of from two to four small rooms. Dwellings of this nature—of course much improved in details—may still be found in the older quarters of English county towns.

The furniture was undoubtedly scanty even in the best houses: there were no elaborate sideboards such as were introduced during the Tudor period: there were few chairs and tables, and not many presses or wardrobes, the family clothing and bedding, when not in use, being kept in chests. But it would be incorrect to suppose that there was not plenty of comfort of a rude kind. There is in the city archives the inventory of the household goods of a man named Hugh le Bevere, who had murdered his wife.[2] It seems fairly certain

[1] Letter Book C, folio 96.

[2] Letter Book F, folio 12.

that he was a tavern-keeper, since a quantity of wine, far beyond the needs of a household of two, appears in the list, and also because the name (a very unusual one) is in a list of tavern-keepers drawn up six years before.[1]

The inventory does not seem to include any "women's gear," and it is probable that the murdered wife's personal possessions were returned to her family. The household furniture comprised a single folding table, two chairs, one cupboard, six chests, and two small coffers—a very meagre allowance according to modern ideas. But as there is no mention of bedsteads, which certainly existed, one must admit the probability of this and other articles having been claimed by the wife's family, so that the furnishing was not actually so scanty as would at first appear.

Otherwise one obtains an impression of appreciable comfort in this very ordinary tavern-keeper's house. There was a carpet, so that rushes were not the universal floor covering even in 1337. The bedding comprised a mattress and three feather-beds, six blankets, two coverlets, two pillows, and eight sheets. Five cushions relieved the hardness of wooden seats; there were linen table-cloths for meals and a better one for show, as well as two curtains. The kitchen was well furnished: it boasted a battery of nine brass cooking-pots of various dimensions, a spit, and a frying pan: two basins and a washing bowl, besides two tubs—presumably for the household laundry.

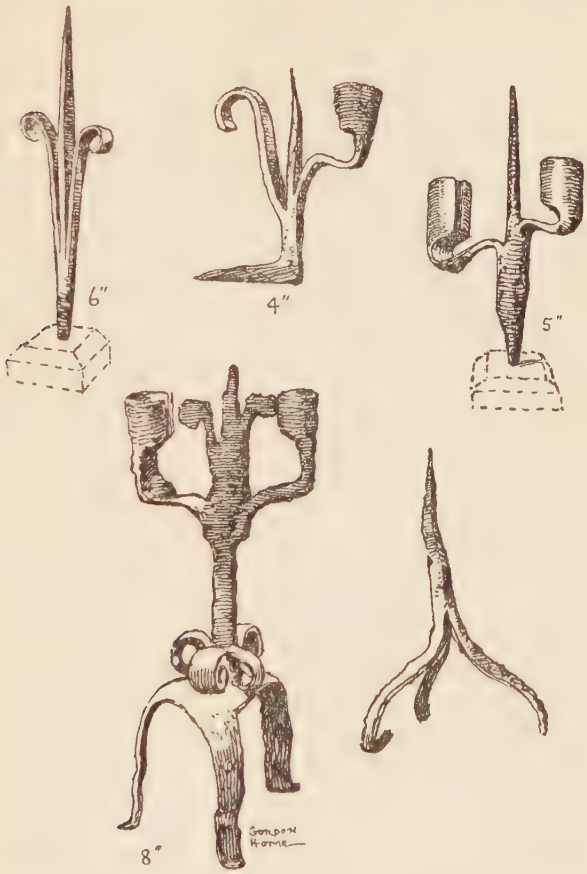
Of plate there were a cocoa-nut cup[2] mounted with silver, valued at 30s., or about £25 in gold value; six silver spoons worth 1s. apiece (say 15s.); and a "mazer" (two-handled cup), value 6s. (£2, 5s.).

Le Bevere, having refused to plead, was not hanged,

[1] Letter Book E, folio 221.

[2] Among the treasure removed by Edward I. from Edinburgh Castle was a nut cup with a silver-gilt support.

but imprisoned "in penance" until his death. It may be supposed that he was allowed to take with him to



LATE MEDIAEVAL CANDLESTICKS OF WROUGHT-IRON FOUND IN LONDON.
The figures show the height in inches.
(*Guildhall Museum.*)

his dungeon some changes of linen and raiment, so that not all his wearing apparel appears in the inventory.

As it is, he was possessed of three fine gowns of cloth lined with fur, one cloth gown, and five ordinary coats and surcoats, beside two hoods. As he might be called upon to serve in the civic militia he had also a quilted "hacqueton" and a helmet.

The nature of the business carried on is very clearly indicated by the presence of six casks of wine valued at one mark (13s. 4d.) apiece. Rhenish wine was priced shortly afterward at 8d. per gallon, and that of Bordeaux at 4d. Being all valued alike, the wine was probably of one quality. If all Rhenish, there were in the house 120 gallons, if Bordeaux, 240 gallons of wine—a quantity so large that it must have been stored for purposes of retailing.

There is no mention of the smaller household and trade utensils, such as knives, plates, crockery, glass, and drinking-cups, of which there must have been a store. Forks were not used in the Middle Ages, what was not conveyed to the mouth with spoon or knife was placed there with the fingers—the silence in regard to this most useful domestic utensil is therefore explained. The explanation already given that the inventory included only the articles absolutely belonging to the man seems to be the correct one. As it is, their total value amounts to £14, 14s. 4d. (roughly £230 in modern gold), a very considerable sum when it has been seen that a fair-sized house could be built for about £12.[1]

One obtains a clear impression that this middle-class city couple, before the tragedy which ended their married existence, lived in a very fair degree of comfort. They possessed all the necessaries of life, not a few comforts, and even some luxuries. They dressed well and expensively; the kitchen equipment may be taken as evidence that their table was well provided: they had almost a superabundance of bedding. No doubt

[1] See p. 336.

they were in comfortable circumstances, but there must have been hundreds or thousands of families as well situated. All of which gives a high impression of the conditions of life in London in the reign of Edward III. There was much which was rude, much which, to modern ideas, was frankly repulsive, but according to mediaeval ideas the citizens of London lived in something like luxury, and the gap between their standard of life and that of the Elizabethan age was not a very wide one.

Ready money was perhaps not very plentiful, but, on the other hand, a silver penny would purchase a great deal: a large wooden bedstead could be bought for 18s.; a small one, such as would to-day be called a truckle bedstead, for 2s.; the large

BRASS TO A LADY OF BEFORE 1420.

She is wearing the crespin and veil headdress. This brass has been lost, but it probably represents Joan, the first wife of Richard, son and heir of Robert, Lord Poynings. He died in 1420.

(*Formerly in St Helen's Church, Bishopsgate*)

chests,[1] in which the "household stuff" was stored, cost about 2s. a piece; feather beds from 2s. to 3s.; a table about 1s.; a chair 4d. or 6d. Hinges for doors are priced in 1356 at 5s. a gross, or less than a halfpenny each, while a bolt could be bought for about 3½d. In regard to those emergencies which occasionally interrupted the course of buying and selling, one finds a citizen's helmet, shoulder-plates, buckler and dagger priced all together at 5s., and a battleaxe at 6d., gauntlets, 6d.[2]

As to clothing, cloth gowns lined with fur were valued from 13s. 4d. to 20s.; plain coats and surcoats at 7s. to 8s. Caps were of all prices, from 2d. to 8d. A shirt or tunic, probably of wool, cost 5d. or 6d. The finest vermilion-dyed cloth was valued in 1319 at £8 per piece. "Murrey" cloth was worth nearly as much, and scarlet cloth about as much as "murrey." The various shades of brown were considerably cheaper—about £4 to £5, 10s. per piece.

A pair of pen-cases with an inkhorn complete was priced at 4d., the inkhorn being worth 1d.; paper was 6d. a quire, and a skin of parchment, 1d.; a book of paper bound in leather from 8d. to 1s.

The ordinary vessels for the service of the table, as used by the better classes, were largely of pewter, but not by any means always pewter as the word is generally understood. In the ordinances of the Pewterers (1348) two varieties are clearly indicated and the first of these —"Fine Pewter"—is an alloy of brass or copper and tin; an exclusively English invention and the forerunner of "Britannia metal." This was specified for articles "that are made square or ribbed," which owing to the

[1] What these were like can be seen in a great many country churches which have preserved examples going back to the rudest types cut from solid sections of oaks.

[2] Letter Book G, folio 45.

rough usage which they experienced or the sharpness of their angles, needed material with a certain quality of resistance. *Esquelles* or porringers, platters, saltcellars, pitchers, dishes, cruets and chrismatories are noted as being made of this special alloy. The ordinary or common pewter, was composed of twenty-two pounds of lead to a hundredweight of tin. Pewter appears in mediaeval England about 1076 and the cauldrons in the royal kitchen were made of it at any rate as early as 1274.

Another alloy frequently used in mediaeval London was latten or latone, which is found employed in the manufacture of many objects from guns to candlesticks. It was composed of copper and zinc, and was specially adapted for monumental brasses.

In food the keynote was coarse profusion rather than delicacy. Our ancestors recruited their strength with solid meals of bread or pastry, meat, and beer, which habit, as their enemies said (according to Shakespeare and other sturdy patriots), rendered them stupid, unable to see danger! There is plenty of evidence in the records of London revealing the good living of the citizens.

The staff of life was provided in several qualities, the best of which was apparently the light and porous variety called "pouffe" or French bread, obviously from the country of its origin. As is known, French bread keeps its mediaeval characteristics to the present day. Apart from this there were three sorts of white bread of fine quality: the best seems to have been that known as "simnel" or "wastel." There were three qualities of ordinary bread—common white, "bis" or brown, and "tourte"—the coarsest and most inferior description. The price of pouffe, wastel, and other fine quantities is noted in 1313 as ½d. a loaf of 24 ounces. The finer kinds were not supposed to be baked in Lent.

The chief bakeries were at Stratford-le-Bow, from whence the loaves were brought into the city in long carts and sold from stations in Cornhill, Cheapside, and Gracechurch Street. All sorts of bakeries were distributed throughout the city, but whether they were chiefly located in or near Bread Street is uncertain.

SPOONS AND KNIVES OF THE 14TH, 15TH, AND 16TH CENTURIES.

The two spoons on left of bronze, 14th or 15th centuries, those on right of pewter probably 15th century. The knives are of rather doubtful date and may be as late as the 17th century. All found in London and now in the Guildhall Museum.

Sanitary conditions, although watched over in the bakeries, must often have been disregarded, for in one instance there is found a baker afflicted with leprosy, who, after repeated injunctions, was still at his trade within the city. He was finally ordered to leave under pain of the pillory, but whether this last order had any effect does not appear.[1]

Wheat, which it must be remembered was only eaten by the wealthier classes, seems on the whole to have

[1] Letter Book G, folio 189.

MEDIAEVAL POTTERY FOUND IN LONDON.

Most of these examples are coated with green, brown, or umber coloured glaze.

The three large-handled jugs in the top row and those in the third row are of the 14th century. The costrels (second from left in second and fourth rows) are very late mediaeval, *c.* Henry VII. The money-holder, bottom row (right corner), is of the same period. The drug-pot (fourth from left in top row) is post-mediaeval, probably 16th to 17th centuries, and the handled jug (fourth from left, second row) is probably of the 13th century.

(*London Museum.*)

been near to modern prices. In 1363 it was being sold in the city for 18d. a bushel, or 6 lbs. for a penny (1s. 3d. gold value); in the following year a penny would purchase 8 lbs. Finely ground flour would cost a good deal more. It should be added that where the rich man paid ½d. for his loaf the poor would obtain a loaf of tourte for perhaps less than a farthing.

A fair idea of the prices of butcher's meat, poultry, and fish may be obtained from the list of provisions presented to the young King Edward III. and his girl-queen, Philippa, on November 23, 1328. There were ten carcasses of beef at 15s. each; 20 pigs at 4s.; 24 swans at 5s.; 24 bitterns and herons, each 3s. 6d.; 10 dozen capons at 5s. a dozen, or 6d. apiece; 4 barrels of pickled sturgeon, value £3 a barrel; also 6 barrels of pike and 6 of eels, whose total value was 10 marks. This was the King's share. The Queen was sent one-half the quantity—because her retinue was much less numerous than that of her spouse, but, in addition, she had 12 pheasants priced at 4s. apiece. In considering the price of beef and pork it must be remembered that the bullocks were much smaller than at present, probably approximating in size to the small cattle of the Highlands of Scotland; the pigs were also small. Upon the whole, it seems that the ordinary necessaries of life were cheap. Englishmen fared well then as now. Wycliffe says that the poor lived longer and better than the rich; the practice of spending lavishly upon food, while sparing money in certain other directions, seems to be still a characteristic of the manual workers in England.

Lydgate's poem,[1] "London Lickpenny," mentions sundry delicacies offered for sale in the restaurants of the mediaeval city—beef, of course; pies of many

[1] John Lydgate was educated at Bury St Edmunds and lived 1370 to *c.* 1451-2. His other famous poem concerning London relates to the return of Henry VI. in 1432. See p. 194.

kinds; boiled sheep's trotters; mackerel. Apparently the mediaeval Londoners were particularly addicted to pasties containing meat and poultry. According to Lydgate, "Hot Pies!" was a common cry in the city. A capon pasty in 1378 was priced at 8d., a hen pasty at 5d. Poultry, although common, was not over cheap. A roast goose was sold for 7d.; a capon for 6d.; a hen for 4d.; a mallard for 4½d.; smaller wild-fowl for 1½d. and upwards. Three roast thrushes cost 2d.; five larks, 1½d.; ten finches, 1d. Thirteen pence were required for a roast pheasant; 18d. for a roast heron; 20d. for a roast bittern; and 6½d. for a roast curlew. Prices such as these were, of course, too high for the ordinary artisan or labourer, whose wages were in the neighbourhood of 6d. per diem.[1]

Ten cooked eggs cost a penny. Roast lamb was priced at 7d. and roast pork at 8d., but the size of the joint is not specified. As to shell-fish, one finds that, in 1418, oysters and mussels were sold at 4d. a bushel—a contrast to the present-day price of several shillings a dozen for "natives." A loin of uncooked beef was priced in 1363 at 5d., which works out perhaps at about ⅓d. per lb. A whole carcass of mutton cost 2s. 5d.; a leg of pork, 3d.

Of vegetables one hears little, and indeed they were not eaten to any great extent. The potato was not introduced until long after the mediaeval period had drawn to a close. Langland, in *Piers Plowman*, mentions those which were used in his time—cabbages, leeks, onions, beans and peas. He draws a mournful picture of the life of the peasants during the winter, the shivering family existing on oatcakes, a substitute for bread made of pounded beans and bran, cheese, and cabbage. This, of course, does not apply to London, where there hardly ever seems to have been anything approaching a

[1] Wages regulations in 1350, after the Black Death.

famine. The leading merchants watched carefully over the provisioning of the city; when, in 1390, scarcity threatened, the Mayor, Adam Bamme, organised an importation of corn in so effective a manner that London was able to send relief to destitute districts throughout England. In 1438 there was again a threat of scarcity, which was averted by the action of the mayor, Stephen Brown, who imported rye from the Baltic.

The national beverages were ale and beer. The city had a great reputation for its ale in the earlier years of the thirteenth century, and at the end of the following century one finds that Chaucer's cook had an expert knowledge of London ale. In 1418 ale was priced at 30s. a tun, while beer was worth only 13s. 4d. for the same quantity. Some doubt exists as to whether the malt liquor was flavoured with hops: but there is reason to believe that the hop was introduced into the country about 1300. This was not enough for our ancestors and the ale was "spiced"—otherwise seasoned with pepper! Hence its nickname of "stingo." There was a considerable consumption of wine among the better classes; chiefly from the Rhineland and Gascony, though there was not a little of home manufacture from the Vale of Gloucester. It was held to be equal to the juice of the Gascon grape; but its price was higher and the Bordeaux vintners drove it out of the London market by the fifteenth century. The Rouen wine importers were given a wharf on the west side of Dowgate at the mouth of Walbrook. The place in time became known as Vintry.

Amusements were naturally of a somewhat crude nature. Athletic sports were common; to running and leaping were added wrestling, fencing, quarterstaff playing, shooting with the bow. Dancing was always popular. Football is a game which seems to have descended from the Romans: it was certainly much

played in mediaeval London and in a rough and boisterous fashion. Water sports were also practised; the best known, perhaps, is the water joust in which prentice lads and others contended from boats. The citizens of the better class found excitement and exercise in hunting and hawking, for which sports there was ample scope in the woods and marshes around London.[1]

The brutal side of the times is shown in the addiction to savage pastimes such as the "baiting" of bulls, bears, and boars. One would add cock-fighting, but since it is still much practised and its promoters assure enquirers that gamefowl "love it," there is no more to say; and in any case it is less unsportsmanlike than shooting at pigeons or hunting a "carted" deer. With a hot-blooded half-civilised race an element of savagery is inseparable from sport.

Indoor amusements were very largely in the nature of games of hazard. After his famous banquet to the four kings Sir Henry Picard presided at gaming. But there were more highly refined pastimes. Music and singing were practised to a considerable extent: one likes to think of Edward III. on the deck of his flagship, with his son on his knee and his lords around him, whiling away the hours before going into action with "catch" and "glee," telling Sir John Chandos to sing his new German songs, and, one need not doubt, joining lustily in the chorus. Both draughts and chess were played. The Northmen who invaded England certainly knew the game of draughts, while chess is associated with a story (possibly mythical) of Cnut, and William the Conqueror, Henry I., John and Edward I., all played the ancient game of the East.

[1] This sketch of the amusements of London is mostly taken from Fitz-Stephen. It is not likely that they experienced any great alteration during the thirteenth, fourteenth, and fifteenth centuries.

Outdoor pageants, "May-games," Lordships of Misrule, and shows were common. A maypole was set up on May Day before the south door of the church of St. Andrew Undershaft. Masques were an indoor amusement probably somewhat rare on account of the almost prohibitive expense of lighting. It is not at all realised that the offering of a wax taper in a church was a real sacrifice. Wax was literally, and without exaggeration, precious: in 1328 it cost 5s. 6d. per pound: the present made by London to Edward III. and Philippa in that year included a hundredweight of wax; and its value was nearly one-third of that of the entire gift!

Tournaments need only be mentioned, for although frequently held in London, as has been noticed,[1] they were not London amusements. The Londoners looked on, and applauded or jeered as they might be inclined, but they were not organised by the practical hard-working citizens.

Miracle plays were perhaps more characteristic of the spirit in which the Londoners faced life: the miracle play at any rate appealed to men of a thoughtful turn of mind. In 1409, when Richard Marlowe was mayor, there was one held at Skinner's Wells. It lasted eight days and ran almost the entire gamut of Scriptural history from the Creation to the Crucifixion.[2] The crowd of spectators was great and included "the most part of the great estates of England."

Of winter sports the most popular was skating, with its accompaniments—tobogganing and sliding. The skates, of which specimens are preserved in the Guildhall Museum, were made of the shin-bones of sheep or other animals of convenient size. The rude skates made steering somewhat uncertain, and the wearers

[1] The most usual place for jousts appears to have been Cheapside, but the Tower was also the scene of these spectacular occasions.

[2] Stow, *Survey*, Temporal Government, sub anno 1409.

guided themselves with poles tipped with bone points. Naturally the roughness of the time expressed itself in sham fights and tilts upon the ice, and accidents were fairly frequent, but the hardy youths of the Middle Ages were not unduly troubled by such trifles as bruises and gashes. It was a rude age, but a virile and exuberant one, and its abundant energy found vent in more violent exercise than is usual in the present quieter epoch.

Not very much is recorded concerning physicians and doctors. The healing art was at a low level until late in the Middle Ages. The profession was largely in the hands of Greeks, Mohammedans, and Jews, and as only the last were represented in England, their expulsion must have been something in the nature of a disaster to the Londoners. Surgery was another matter and there is evidence of a considerable number of expert practitioners in the city who took much care to secure efficiency. Thus, in 1354, a certain John le Spicer was summoned for his lack of care in relation to an "enormous and horrible hurt on the right side of the jaw of Thomas de Shene appearing." Three expert English surgeons and one Frenchman—the Prior of St Vaast de la Hogue—were called to give evidence: they decided unanimously that John le Spicer was not a proficient in his profession.[1] At a later date one Roger Clerk was condemned to the pillory for pretending to be able to cure sick persons by the use of charms. In 1369 the mayor, Simon de Morden, and the aldermen swore in three Master-Surgeons for the city; namely, John Dunheved (the old name of Launceston), John Hyndstoke, and Nicholas Kyldesby.[2] Hyndstoke was still a Master-Surgeon in 1390, and in that year three fresh colleagues were admitted. They were bound not only to practise their profession efficiently but to exercise supervision over all other surgeons and physicians. It is not commonly

[1] Letter Book G, folio 18. [2] *Ibid.*, folio 219.

known and yet quite clear that women as well as men followed the profession.[1]

Minor surgery seems to have been very much in the hands of the barbers. In 1415 the frequent appearance of inefficiency among them led to the appointment of two masters of their craft specially chosen as "well for their knowledge and probity, as for the different kinds of difficult cures that had been sagaciously performed and effected by them." There is fair evidence to show that although medicine and surgery were in a somewhat primitive state, they were by no means neglected, but it was not until the Middle Ages had almost come to an end that a work on what may be termed *materia medica* came into common use through printing.

It should not be imagined that England was behind Western Europe either in medicine or surgery, for, as early as 1290, an Englishman named Gilbert wrote a compendium of medicine. Perhaps the flower of the profession in the reigns of the three Edwards was the famous John Gaddesden, a graduate of Merton College, Oxford, and court physician to Edward III. About 1350 there was flourishing John Ardern, a surgeon of great repute. That Gaddesden was frequently, if not regularly, in London goes without saying, and for those who could afford him, his services must have been frequently in request.

[1] Letter Book H, folio 248.

CHAPTER XII

RELIGIOUS LIFE IN MEDIAEVAL LONDON

Of facts concerning the Christianity of London at the beginning of the Middle Ages there are scarcely any. The archæological evidence for the Roman period is almost negligible;[1] it is only certain that in 314 there was a bishop of London and therefore a Christian community of some sort. Later, in about 420 a certain Fastidius is named as Bishop by Gennadius of Marseilles. In the confusion of the fifth and sixth centuries, after 450, the references to Christianity in London are restricted to a few legendary allusions which, while they deserve due consideration, may be fiction, especially those which are found in the pages of Geoffrey of Monmouth. He says[2] that Theon, Bishop of Gloucester, was made Archbishop of London somewhere about the year 540 and fled from his devastated city at some uncertain date between that year and 596. It must never be forgotten that Geoffrey's fiction may contain some scraps of fact, and in the absence of any other information one does not throw his statements entirely on one side.

A more honest, if uncritical writer, Jocelyn of Furness, who wrote in the twelfth century, gave a list of British bishops of London and this list Bishop Stubbs (*Ecclesiastical Succession*) was disposed to accept—but it is not clear whether Jocelyn had at his disposal any reliable records. There is nothing to show that these were not bishops of London during the greater part of the obscure period 450–596; but the Christian community which they ruled may have been insignificant; it seems certain that there was no bishop of London at the time of the

[1] See the author's *Roman London*, pp. 221-3.

[2] *Geoffrey of Monmouth*, Book XI. chap. iii.

coming of St Augustine, since he consecrated in 604 his subordinate Mellitus.

The earliest tradition of Christianity in London centres round the Church of St Peter-on-Cornhill, which stands in the midst of Roman foundations in a very favourable central position. In mediaeval times it was held that it had been the cathedral of London for more than 400 years after 179, but on this one can hardly place any reliance since the foundation of the legend is the story of King Lucius, which is due to a misapprehension.[1] In any case the whole of the evidence as to the fortunes of Christianity up to the year 604 is fragmentary in the extreme. If any analogy may be made from what happened in Ireland during the Viking devastations, a large proportion of the population of London lapsed into paganism, finding no doubt that the doctrine of turning the other cheek to the enemy, who had already inflicted grievous harm, was impracticable in the circumstances. One must presume that, in this time of relapse, the supposed cathedral of St Peter became used for other purposes for, when Aethelberht established Mellitus in the city, the new bishop selected another site which, so far as is known, had no previous association with Christianity. It is quite evident, too, that the intrusion of the revived faith was not very popular, for although King Saeberht followed Aethelberht's example in being baptized, his sons did not, nor did the Kentish king's son and successor.

After twelve years' episcopate, Bishop Mellitus was driven out of London never to return, and official Christianity was eclipsed in the city for at least thirty-seven years. In fact it is not at all certain that Cedd, who was made bishop of the East Saxons in 653-4 by King Sigeberht, exercised any authority in London.[2] Bede seems clearly to say that the location of his see was

[1] See the author's *Roman York*, pp. 94-5. [2] See p. 26.

Othona, as mentioned in Chapter I., London being at the time in all probability under the domination of Penda, the great pagan king of Mercia. Although Bede has a good deal to say concerning the activities of this saintly bishop, London is never mentioned in connection with him, and it may be with some plausibility assumed that he was never allowed to enter it by the Mercian kings, since he had been imposed upon the East Saxons by the hostile Northumbrians.

The first bishop of London after the break was the somewhat questionable personage, Wini, who is said to have bought the office from King Wulfhere of Mercia, but after this, the continuity of the bishopric is unbroken down to the present day, save, perhaps, for brief intervals during the Danish invasions.

What were the outward aspects and inward characteristics of this now firmly established Christianity in the city? From the external point of view London, by the time of the Norman Conquest, had become almost as truly a city of churches as mediaeval Moscow. A century later there were 126 parish churches and 13 monasteries packed within an area of perhaps no more than 400 acres.[1] A large proportion of these were undoubtedly of ancient foundation and a few of them might quite easily have gone back to Roman times.

Fitz-Stephen's total of 126 parish churches at the end of the twelfth century need not be questioned, for he is hardly likely to have been misinformed, but later some of the parishes must have been amalgamated or the churches disappeared—they may have been too badly damaged in fires to be worth restoration—so that when the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291 was drawn up, the total, including St Paul's and various churches outside the walls and in Southwark, was only 119. At the end of the sixteenth century, when Stow published

[1] The Roman walls enclosed about 350 acres.

his *Survey*, the number was increased to 125. As to whether any of them date back to Roman times, in default of appreciable archæological evidence, it is necessary to rely mainly on the testimony afforded by the dedications. Considerations of siting must also have weight in any attempt in determining those churches which may be placed in an early group.

During the most flourishing period of the Roman Empire it may be taken as certain that no Christian church would have been allowed to flaunt its pretensions within the central quarters of any city of the Western Empire, therefore it seems desirable to look to the outskirts for suggestive dedications. One name is that of St Helen the mother of Constantine the Great, who died somewhere about 327. This church is in Bishopsgate, not very far within the walls, and foundations discovered recently close to the north side of the building were of a form suggesting a Romanesque if not Roman origin. The church was undoubtedly in existence before 1010, for in that year, in the midst of the Danish invasions, the relics of St Edmund were brought into London for safety and deposited in St Helen's. The cult of St Helen was not very long-lived, but there was a revival of it in the twelfth century on account of the writings of Geoffrey of Monmouth.

The second dedication is that to St Clement, to whom there were two churches, one in Eastcheap and the other in the Strand, and the latter is known to have been in existence in the tenth century. St Clement being one of the earliest Apostolic Fathers—he was the third or fourth Pope—the choice of his name for these churches points either to a very early date or to a comparatively late one, when St Clement was regarded as the patron of ocean seamen.

Another possible Roman dedication is that of St Pancras (Pancratius—Stow calls him Pancrate). There

were two churches so consecrated, one south of Cheapside and the other about one and a half miles outside the walls to the north-west. The first has disappeared save for a fragment of its churchyard in Pancras Lane, while the other contains thirteeenth century work. Then it is possible that the tradition just mentioned concerning St Peter-on-Cornhill *may* have a foundation in fact.

The churches of St Stephen, Walbrook,[1] and St Thomas-the-Apostle, by their names, appear to be early, and the same applies to St Mary Aldermary, presumably the first-built of the group of sixteen parish churches dedicated to the Virgin.[2] There is one single dedication to St George and that is in Southwark. This church was undoubtedly in existence in 1122, when it was granted to Bermondsey Abbey as a vicarage, and, as the saint was a favourite with Roman Christians, this place of worship in the southern suburb might easily date back to the fourth or fifth century. Of the various dedications to St Martin (*c.* 316-400) it is impossible to say very much. His cult was most probably introduced from Gaul, where it was very popular among the Franks. The famous church outside Canterbury does

[1] There was an early Norman church on the site.

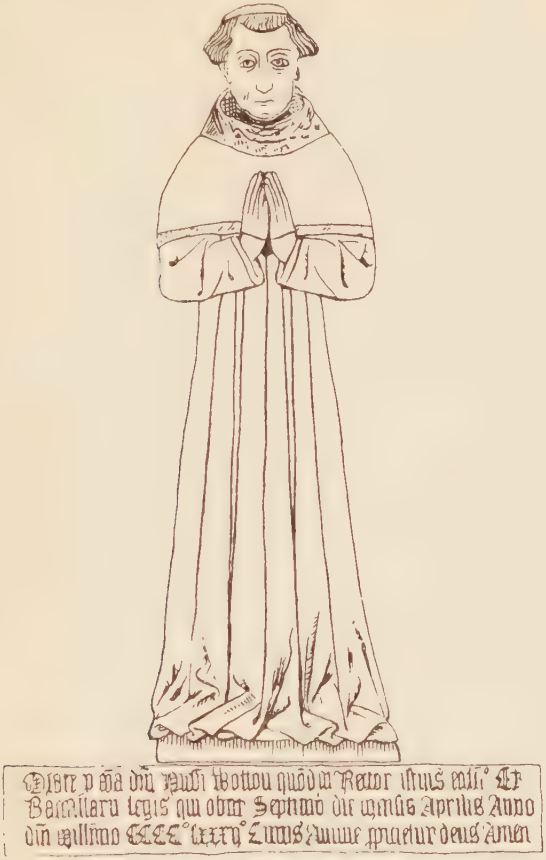
[2] The churches of St Mary in London in the 16th century were :

St Mary Abchurch.
St Mary Axe (or Pellipar).
St Mary-at-Hill.
St Mary Aldermary.
St Mary Aldermanbury.
St Mary Bothaw.
St Mary-le-Bow (or Arches).
St Mary Colechurch.
St Mary Magdalen, Milk St.
St Mary Magdalen, in Piscaria.
St Mary de Monte Alto (Monthaut).
St Mary Overie.
St Mary Somerset.
St Mary Stayning (Lane).
St Mary Woolchurch.
St Mary Woolnoth.

In the time of Richard I. there were also St Mary ad Fontem and St Mary in Cuninghope and Westcheap.

In addition there were the churches belonging to the hospitals of St Mary of Bethlehem and St Mary Spital.

not afford much help, for it is not known whether Queen Bercta found it so dedicated or selected it herself—the latter is more probable.



Brass to the Memory of Nicholas Wotton, Rector of St Martin, Outwich, who died in 1482.

The Church having been destroyed, the monuments are now in St Helen's, Bishopsgate. This is on the floor of the South Chapel.

From what has been said it does not seem possible to suggest a Roman date for more than eight or nine of

the 126 churches of mediaeval London, and in all cases the evidence, it must be admitted, is slight.

Coming to the Anglo-Saxon epoch, it is still extremely difficult to point to any sacred edifices dating to a period earlier than 900. The names of St Ethelburga,[1] St Mildred, and St Swithun suggest an Alfredian or a pre-Alfredian origin, but it would be unwise to say more. St Alphege, St Dunstan, St Edmund-the-Martyr, St Magnus-the-Martyr, St Martin Orgar, St Olave, are dedications which clearly belong to the later Anglo-Saxon age, if not to the early Norman epoch. The same may probably be said of St Botolph, to whom four churches were consecrated.

Dedications such as St Giles, St Denis (Dionys), St Sepulchre, St Thomas of Acon (Acre), and St Nicholas Acon point clearly to the Norman-Angevin period and the influence of the Crusades. The date of the Priory of St Bartholomew the Great is known to be 1123, and St Mary-le-Bow and St Giles's, Cripplegate, belong approximately to the last decade of the eleventh century. It must, however, be remembered that the dates of these last two structures merely refer to the rebuilding in London then in progress after the great fire of 1087; St Mary-le-Bow, for example, seems to have been merely a reconstruction on the site of an earlier church.

It is perhaps possible to deduce, in view of the number of post-Anglo-Saxon dedications, that a considerable increase in the churches of London took place between about 1066 and 1200, but it is impossible to imagine that there were ever more than the enormous total given by Fitz-Stephen.

Judging from Stow, it would seem that there was a great restoration of the churches during the later Plantagenet period. The accuracy of his statement is

[1] St Ethelburga was the first abbess of Barking and sister of St Earconwald, the fifth bishop of English (*i.e.* Anglo-Saxon) London.

borne out by the architecture of the majority of the dozen or so structures which have survived the ravages of the Great Fire of 1666 and the demolition brought about by ecclesiastical vandalism since that catastrophe.

Of the 125 churches in Stow's time there perished 89, leaving, it may be presumed, 36 standing. Of these there now remain within the walls eight complete

TWO RECENT (1926) DISCOVERIES ON THE SITE OF ST MARTIN-LE-GRAND.
A sculptured corbel and a stone lamp or cresset about 4 inches in height.

churches and portions of three others. It is not easy to be sure which churches Stow included in his list, but outside the walls there still exist three complete mediaeval churches, four chapels, an abbey, portions of two priory churches, the eastern parts of a great cruciform church in Southwark and parts of two lesser churches. A complete list of these survivals is given in the appendix.

The monastic life of London during the Middle Ages occupied a prominent position in the city, one at least of the establishments—the famous Charterhouse—having been to the last much beloved by the citizens on account of its charities and other useful activities. The Benedictine order was strictly-speaking not represented in London at all, its great house of St Peter being at Westminster, and was not founded until 1050. The reformed Benedictines of the rule of Cluny

were settled in the marsh of Bermondsey about 1082 by Aylwyn the Child, a citizen of London, but it was not until 1350 that the white-robed Cistercians, who have left so many architectural relics in England, were established in London. The site, which was given to them by Edward III., was to the east of the Tower, where now the Mint stands, and the dedication of the abbey was St Mary of Grace. The foundation was a direct result of the terrible visitation of the Black Death.

Twenty-one years later (1371) the Carthusians were established outside the walls, at what came to be called the Charterhouse, by Edward III.'s famous general, Sir Walter, Baron de Manny, K.G. After this had been suppressed, the buildings became the property of Lord North and later of the Duke of Norfolk. In 1611 they were bought by Thomas Sutton, who converted them into a hospital for eighty poor gentlemen and a school for forty boys. Both almshouse and school survive.

There is known to have been at least one religious house in the city ten years before the Norman Conquest. This was St Martin-le-Grand, a collegiate foundation originally intended for secular canons and, according to a charter of William the Conqueror dated 1068 confirming its privileges, the founders were two brothers named Ingelric and Edward. It had the usual privileges of sanctuary and, possibly owing to its position between Newgate and Chepe, this was not infrequently utilised, with the result that there were occasional disputes with the civic authorities: one case recorded by Stow, in which the famous John Carpenter figured conspicuously as counsel for the city, shows that the canons were successful in maintaining their claim against the Corporation.

The College was not dissolved until 1548, and then one reads of a melancholy descent, a large tavern having been built on the site of the church, but notwithstanding

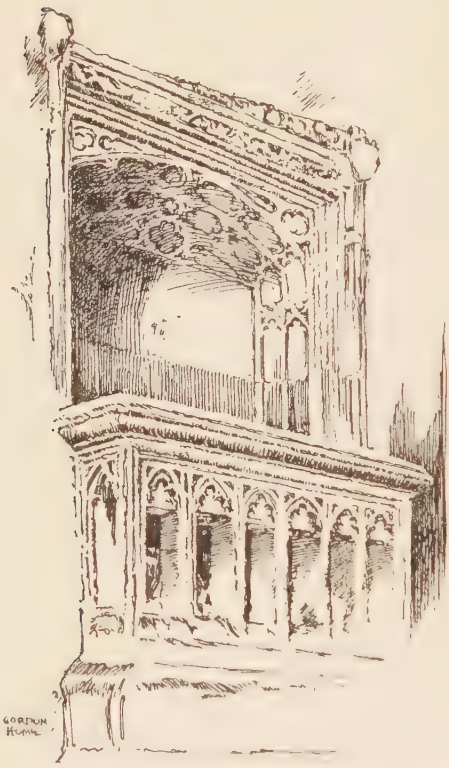
the degradation of the sacred site, the promiscuous inhabitants who became occupants of the new houses coolly claimed the privileges of the canons, including sanctuary rights!

During the Norman period the tendency in London was not to found houses of the Benedictine order, but of canons regular, or Augustinian canons as they are generally called. St Paul's was, like Wells, Exeter, Salisbury, and other great cathedrals, a non-monastic church served by canons whose duties were mainly those connected with the offices and administration of the cathedral. Besides St Paul's, there were three houses of the Augustinians in the city, *e.g.*, the Priories of St Mary Overie; Holy Trinity, Aldgate (the richest in London and the first to be dissolved); and St Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield, with its famous hospital: the progenitor of the world-famed institution of to-day.[1]

The preaching friars began to appear in England at the beginning of the thirteenth century, and their first location in London was that of the Franciscans or Greyfriars in the Shambles, just within Newgate. The date of this first friary was 1224, and it was not until seventeen years later that the Carmelites or Whitefriars settled in what was then a poverty-stricken quarter on the west side of the mouth of the Fleet. In 1253 the Austin (Augustinian) Friars established themselves in the quarter close to the present Stock Exchange, which still recalls its association with the bare-footed preachers. Within four years (1257) they were followed by the minor order of the Friars of the Sack, whose place of abode was first outside Aldersgate and afterwards in Old Jewry. It was not until nearly twenty years later, in 1276, that the Dominicans, although they had reached

[1] Stow mentions the founding by Sir William Walworth of a college connected with the Church of St Michael, Crooked Lane, but this may have been little more than a chantry.

England as early as 1221, established themselves on the opposite side of the Fleet to the Carmelites, their house being surrounded by an addition to the Roman wall of London which came no further west than half-way down Ludgate Hill. Last of all, in 1319, came the Crutched Friars, so called from the cross which occupied a conspicuous position on their frocks. The site found for them was immediately to the east of the church of St Olave, Hart Street, whose parishioners were given the right of burial in the monastery graveyard. The new Port of London Authority building occupies much of the site of this friary.

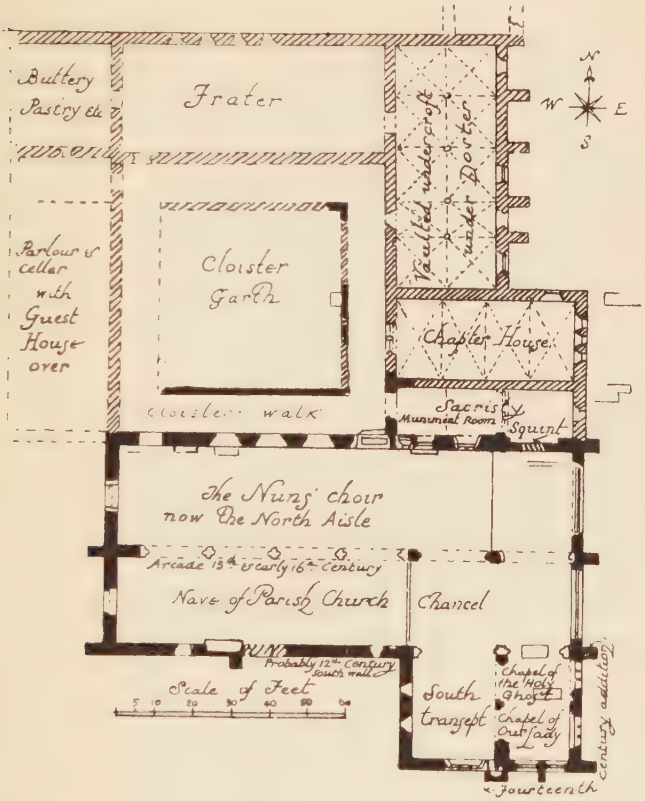


AN EASTER SEPULCHRE IN THE NORTH AISLE OF ST HELEN'S, BISHOPSGATE.

In the lower portion there are six diagonal apertures giving a glimpse of the altar from the sacristy of the nunnery.

The influence of these bare-footed enthusiasts was at first remarkable, their disinterestedness, their devotion to the poor and unfortunate and their high religious ideal making them deservedly popular in the city. Later on they degenerated from their altruism and some of the coarsest taunts of mediaeval English

poems were directed against them, but in the thirteenth century they were in their prime and their influence



PLAN OF THE NUNNERY OF ST HELEN, BISHOPSGATE, AND THE CHURCH, ONE AISLE OF WHICH, CUT OFF FROM THE PARISH CHURCH, WAS USED BY THE NUNS.

The portions shaded show what has been destroyed. In the 18th century parts of the walls of the frater and adjoining buildings stood nearly to their full height.
(*Drawn from a plan in the London County Council Survey.*)

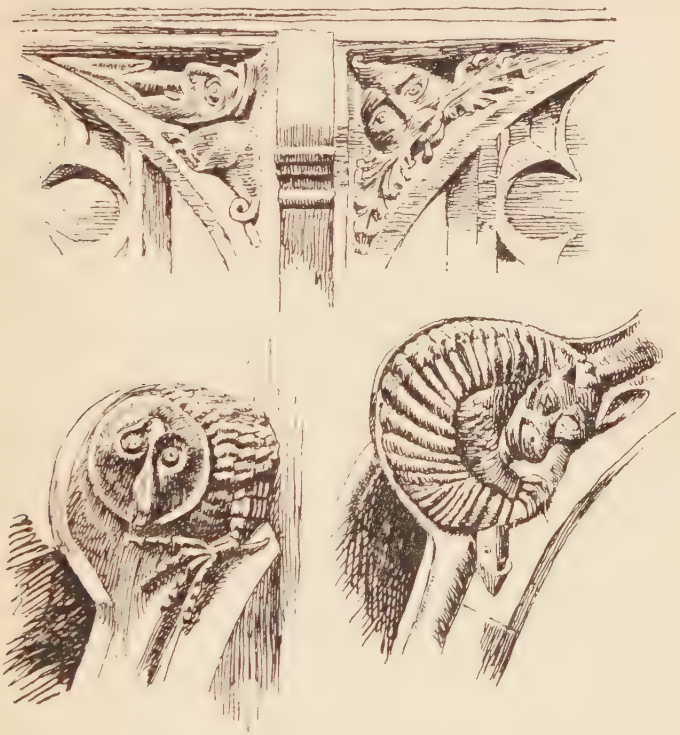
counted for much in the struggle for liberty in the reign of Henry III. It is notable that the period of their degeneracy is marked by the rise of Lollardy.

Of convents of nuns there were three, of which one, St Helen's, was within the city walls and the two others without to the east and north-west. The oldest was the Benedictine nunnery of St Mary, Clerkenwell ("Beatae Mariae de Fonte Clericorum"), founded about 1100 by Baron Jorden Briset, who with his wife Muriall was buried in the chapterhouse[1]—a somewhat unusual position. Next in order of antiquity was the nunnery of St Helen in Bishopsgate Street, founded about 1210 by William the Goldsmith, a wealthy London citizen. Its special connection was with St Paul's, which placed in the gift of the Prioress, the church of St Helen adjoining, for the annual payment of half a mark. On election every prioress had to swear fealty to the Dean and Chapter. The association of the convent with the parish church is shown by the two naves which still exist side by side. In 1922 the site of the conventual buildings to the north of the church was cleared and nearly the whole of the plan recovered, certain features of the south walk of the cloister and the sacristy having been preserved. Further, underneath these presumably thirteenth-century foundations were discovered others, including an apse, which may have been Norman or earlier. The last house of nuns was that of the order of St Clara, generally known as the Poor Clares. It was founded in 1293[2] by Prince Edmund "Crouchback," brother of Edward I., and it was situated a little to the north-east of the Tower, outside the city wall and fronting on to the road by the defensive ditch which has been called the Minories for at least the last four centuries.

Distinct from establishments intended primarily for purposes of religion there were no less than sixteen institutions devoted to charitable objects which, having small monastic communities attached to them, rank as lesser

[1] Stow's *Survey of London*. [2] *Ibid.*

religious houses. Two of them at least dated back to the Norman period; the Lepers' Hospital of St Giles-in-the-Fields, founded by Good Queen Maude (or



SOME EXAMPLES OF THE WOODWORK OF ST KATHERINE'S HOSPITAL.

This charitable institution was destroyed in order to construct St Katherine's Dock, but the late 14th century woodwork and the monuments in the Chapel were removed to a new building erected at Regent's Park. They are the best of the few examples of London's mediaeval woodwork which have survived.

Matilda), the wife of Henry I., about 1117; and the almshouses of St Katherine-by-the-Tower, established by another Queen Matilda, also of English descent, the wife of Stephen. The prevalence of the dread disease of leprosy in the Middle Ages was the cause of the

founding of a hospital for London girls afflicted by that malady. It was called St James's-in-the-Fields. Those afflicted with blindness after 1331 had a refuge in the Hospital of St Mary-within-Cripplegate, founded in that year by William Elsing, citizen and mercer, who himself became the first Prior. On the site of this house Stow states that there had been at one time a small nunnery which, however, had fallen into great decay when Elsing put in hand his beneficent work. The hospice of St Mary, Barking, was a hospital for priests and inhabitants of London both male and female, who were inflicted with insanity. The institution was in some form or other founded or refounded by the savage John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester,[1] and closely adjoined on the north side the church of All Hallows, Barking.

Outside Bishopsgate stood the Hospital of St Mary of Bethlehem, founded in 1246 by Simon Fitz-Mary, citizen and Sheriff of London, as a priory of canons and canonesses for the care of lunatics. The endowments were increased at various times and the purpose is maintained at the present day, although the original site is no longer occupied.

Of what may be called combination hospitals and houses of charitable relief there were several. One of the earliest of these was the priory and hospital of St Mary-without-Bishopsgate, founded in 1197 by Walter Brune, a citizen of London, and his wife Rosia. It continued its beneficial activities down to the reign of Henry VIII., when it was suppressed, much to the detriment of the community; for its well-equipped wards contained as many as 180 beds. Another notable institution of the same type was the hospital of St Thomas of Acon (or Acre), founded about 1190 by Thomas de Heili and his wife Agnes Becket, sister of St Thomas of

[1] See p. 227.

Canterbury. The buildings and endowment were the personal property of Gilbert Becket, the father of the archbishop, and included the site of Thomas Becket's birthplace. Suppressed by Henry VIII. in 1537, it was bought by Sir Richard Gresham and the Mercers' Company and reopened in 1541 as a lay institution. The site is now occupied by the Mercers' Hall.

Other foundations of the same description were St Mary Rouncevall by Charing Cross, of alien origin, and St Thomas in Southwark, founded by Richard, Prior of Bermondsey in 1213, and lavishly endowed to the really remarkable extent of £344 per annum by the famous Pierre de Roches, Bishop of Winchester. It remained attached to the Abbot of Bermondsey until 1428, when it made an arrangement by which it pursued an independent existence on payment of a yearly rent. In 1537 it was suppressed, but fifteen years later the city purchased and repaired the buildings, and in November it was once more opened for the relief of the sick and poor.

The great Benedictine House of Cluny, so celebrated in the Middle Ages, maintained no less than three hospitals, one outside Aldersgate, another outside Cripplegate; the third in Holborn. Being alien houses, all three were suppressed by Henry V. when he embarked in his ambitious war of conquest in France. Their replacement was perhaps in the mind of Richard Whittington when he founded his college and almshouse of the Holy Spirit and St Mary for thirteen poor men, for whom he provided 2d. a day in addition to all their other requirements. At the Suppression, the Mercers' Company made fresh endowments so that the institution survives to-day. The last foundation of this kind, the Hospital of St Anthony, was endowed in the reign of Henry III. by the Brotherhood of St Anthony of Vienne on the Rhône. There seems to have been a

school attached to it from the beginning, and in 1442 Henry VI. re-endowed it so that it could maintain five scholars at Eton and afterwards at Oxford to be instructed in the faculty of arts. The rate of maintenance at Oxford, it should be noted, was £2, 3s. 4d. per annum, or 10d. weekly.

Last of all must be mentioned the two Orders of military monks, those of the Temple and of St John of

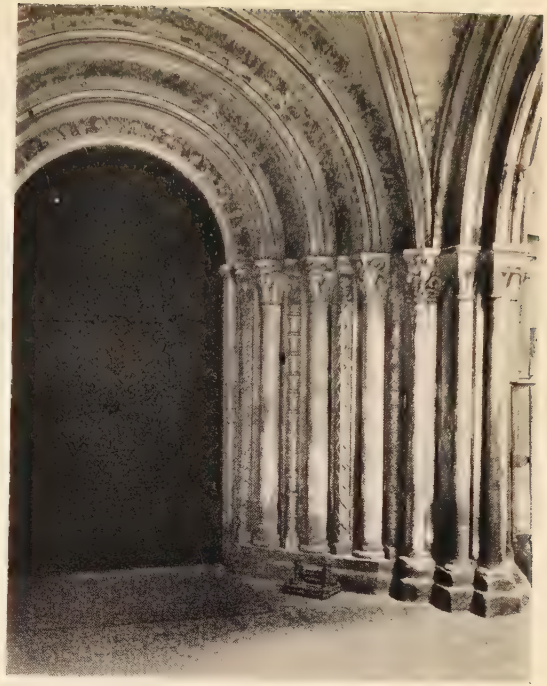
RUINS OF THE PRIORY CHURCH OF ST JOHN OF JERUSALEM.
The Crypt of the Church is still to be seen at Clerkenwell.

Jerusalem. The Knights of St John were the first to settle in London about the year 1100 at Clerkenwell in the suburbs. The principal founder was the same Baron Jorden Briset, who established the nunnery adjoining, and the Order continued at Clerkenwell up to the Dissolution, when the revenue of the Priory was no less than £3386 per annum. Edward, Duke of Somerset, to provide stone for his ostentatious palace in the Strand, blew up the greater part of the splendid church. Stow says that "the great bell tower" was the finest which he had ever seen—"a most curious

G.H.

THE BEAUTIFUL TRANSITIONAL ROTUNDA OF THE TEMPLE CHURCH.

It was completed before the end of the 12th century and is a unique example of Transitional Norman architecture in circular form.



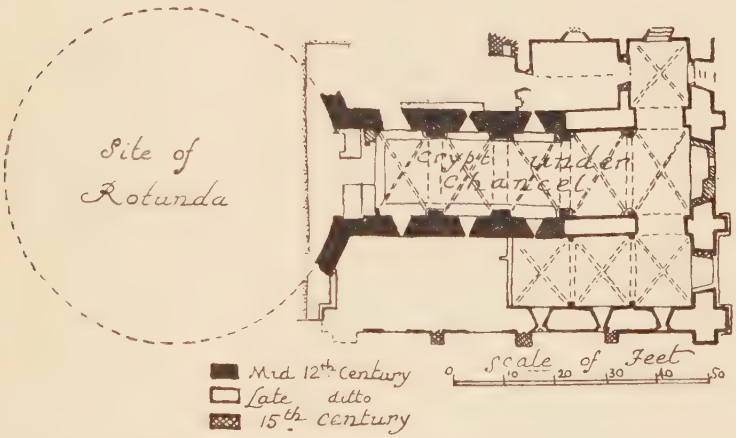
G.H.

THE TRANSITIONAL NORMAN WEST PORCH OF THE TEMPLE CHURCH.

It is the only surviving example of a doorway of this period in London, and the details of its sculpture are remarkably preserved.

piece of workmanship, graven, gilt and enamelled." The church was dedicated in 1185 by Heraclius, the last Latin patriarch of Jerusalem who actually resided in the Holy City.

The rival foundation of the Knights Templars was first established about 1130, near the north end of Chancery Lane, but in 1184 it was moved to the slopes of the Thames, south of Fleet Street. Their church



PLAN OF THE EXISTING PORTIONS OF THE CHURCH OF THE PRIORY OF ST JOHN OF JERUSALEM AT CLERKENWELL.

was dedicated by Heraclius in the same year as that of Hospitallers and was completed in its present form in 1240.

By this time the Templars were becoming extremely unpopular, even although, in England, they could count among their numbers such saintly figures as St Thomas of Cantilupe of Hereford. While they continued to send contingents to fight the infidel in Palestine, at home they began to devote themselves very much to the business of acquiring property and banking. Their methods were not said to have been

dishonest, but were hardly consonant with their vows, and their ruin was brought about, probably for financial reasons, by Philip IV. (le Bel) in 1307. All the Templars in England were arrested in 1308, and in 1314 the King of France, with the help of his convenient tool, Pope Clement V.—a Frenchman, completed the destructive work by burning the last Grand Master in front of Notre Dame at Paris. There was no such atrocity in England, but the Order was dissolved and its property seized by Edward II. The new Temple in London, with all its buildings and other properties, was granted to Aymer de Valence, the great Earl of Pembroke, and after sundry vicissitudes it passed into the hands of the Knights of St John. In the reign of Edward III. they leased it for a rent of £10 per annum to the students of the Common Laws of England, and the church became the common place of worship for the Inner and the Middle Temple—thus one of the loveliest of late Norman and early English churches of the city has been preserved down to the present day.

Over and above all these regular foundations, both ecclesiastical and monastic, there was an enormous multiplication of chantries, which may be best described as separate chapels for the chanting of masses. Through the failure of endowments, a number of these were amalgamated in 1391 by Bishop Robert de Braybrooke. The largest number of chantries existing at one time was about 48. These chapels were not only within the churches but grouped near them and they increased in an amazing fashion in the fourteenth century owing to the emotions caused by the various "Black Deaths."

Attached to St Paul's at the Dissolution there were no less than 35 chantries[1] with 54 priests, representing 58 original foundations, maintained by nearly 90 priests.

[1] Dugdale's *St Paul's*, pp. 18-29.

The most magnificent was undoubtedly that built by Henry IV. for his father, John of Gaunt, and his mother, Constance of Castile.

It was most lavishly endowed from the King's private property in London and had a whole choir of priests for whom a special house had to be rented. There was extravagant provision of altar furniture, bread and wine for the communion, wax for the eight great tapers,[1] which were to burn on every Sunday on all the great festivals and on the death anniversaries for ever.

Not only royal princes, but bishops, ecclesiastics, and prominent citizens were active in chantry-founding. As an example of the last, one reads of Sir John Pultney, four times mayor, endowing a chantry for three priests.

Hic iacet dñs Willmꝰ Rythyn quondam Rector eccl̃ie sc̃te Fidis
minor Canonicus et Elemosinarius eccl̃ie sc̃ti Pauli Londõ qui
obiit xxᵒ die Aprilis anno dñi M CCCC cuius aĩe ppiciet deus amẽ

WILLIAM RYTHYN, RECTOR OF ST FAITH'S CHURCH, AND MINOR CANON OF ST PAUL'S.
(From the brass in Old St Paul's, engraved by Hollar.)

Probably there was no church in the city with which

[1] Not 80 as given by Dean Milman, *Annals of St Paul's*, p. 146. See *Hist. of St Paul's Cathedral*, Sir Wm. Dugdale, 1818 edn., p. 27.

chantries were not associated, their number being certainly not less than some hundreds. They were served by a peculiar class of ecclesiastics called mass priests, who were very loosely attached to the original foundations and consequently under no strict control. It is to be feared that their reputation soon became extremely tarnished. Evidently a chantry afforded opportunities not to be despised by a man of no great energy or religious spirit. There was little labour and that of a most mechanical kind, while the salary was tolerably secure, and many opportunities were found of increasing it with slight exertion. Very often a parish priest would obtain leave to abandon his cure and take one of these decorative posts of the lazy. Lack of duties to fill their days led the mass-priests into a vicious way of living. The scandal was too great to pass unnoticed by the Archbishops of Canterbury of the fourteenth century, and one finds both Simon Islip and Simon of Sudbury castigating them in language which can scarcely be given here verbatim. They were accused of falling into the deepest gulf of evil, of indulging in gluttony, lust, and covetousness, and becoming the odious scandal of all ecclesiastics. Since they are also violently attacked by the court poet Chaucer, and by Langland the poet of the poor, both of whom bring almost identical charges against them, it must be assumed that they are well proven. Chaucer says of his good Parson that:

> He sette not his Benefice to hire
> And lefte his shepe accombred in the mire,
> And ran to London unto Seint Poules
> To seken him a chaunterie for soules;

while the gloomy Langland says in his *Piers Plowman*:[1]

> Persones and parshe prests . pleynede to the bisshop
> That hure parshens ben poore . sithe the pestilence tyme
> To have licence and leue . in Londone to dwelle
> And synge ther for symonye . for seluer ys swete.

[1] Langland, *Piers Plowman*, C. Passus, i. 83-9.

The ordinary clergy of London contained among their numbers very probably good and bad representatives of their class, but that they were above the average of those in the country parishes it is permissible to deduce on the analogy of the conditions of the seventeenth century, when the London clergy were acknowledged to be a singularly fine body of religious teachers.

Excepting St Dunstan, so little is known of the bishops before the Norman Conquest that they remain scarcely more than names: even St Earconwald is a shadowy figure. After the Norman Conquest, however, a clearer view is obtained of the governors of the church of London and, on the whole, one finds among them a large proportion of men of character and ability. They may not always have been religiously-minded prelates, but their activities appealed to the enterprising community in which they lived. For a very long time there is no doubt that there floated before their eyes the hope of making London, in name as well as in fact, the metropolis of the national Church and such a project must have been cherished by the Londoners. A majority of the city's bishops held high office in the state. Maurice, the third Norman bishop, was the Conqueror's chancellor, and his successor, Richard I. de Belmeis, applied directly to the Pope for an archiepiscopal pall. It was only the influence of St Anselm which deprived Richard of becoming the first Archbishop of London. Another bishop of high character and great abilities was Gilbert Foliot, the famous antagonist of Becket.

Throughout the mediaeval period six bishops of London reached the primacy, three of them before and four after the Conquest.[1] On the whole the Londoners

[1] Mellitus, St Dunstan, and Robert of Jumièges before the Conquest, and Simon of Sudbury, Wm. Courtenay, John Kemp, and Wm. Warham afterwards.

seem to have been proud of their bishops and very much disposed to stand by them as their natural leaders. Roger Niger was distinguished among the patriotic leaders in the reign of Henry III., and his successor, Fulk Basset, was quite as active and resolute. He told the King on one occasion that the Pope and King might rob him of his mitre, but in that case he would put on a helmet. Fulk's successors were by no means worthy of him, although several of them were distinguished officials, such as Ralph de Baldock, who was Chancellor and also a writer, the compiler of a history of England from the earliest times down to his own. This work was known to Leland, but it has since perished. His successor, Gilbert de Segrave, was also a man of letters who composed theological works. Of Simon of Sudbury mention has already been made, and he seems otherwise to have been a singularly broad-minded man for the age, for he is said on one occasion, when preaching to a multitude of pilgrims at the shrine of St Thomas at Canterbury, to have reproved them for their superstitious folly, warning them that no amount of external devotion could win them absolution for their sins.[1] His murder in the Tower by Wat the Tyler was said by church zealots to be a punishment for his forbearance towards the Lollards. He was a curious contrast to his successor in the see of London, the proud and imperious William de Courtenay, who, like him, became Archbishop of Canterbury and Chancellor.

A bishop of somewhat different type was Courtenay's successor, Robert Braybroke, a vigorous ecclesiastical reformer who set right many abuses which had crept into the chapter of St Paul's; made a great effort to prevent trading on Sundays and put at least a temporary stop to the buying, selling, gaming and brawling which rendered the nave of the cathedral a frequent scene of

[1] William Chartham, a Canterbury monk, quoted by Wharton.

Orate pro anima Roberti Braybroke
quadringentesimo quarto cuius anime et omnium fidelium defunctorum propietur deus amen

BRASS IN OLD ST PAUL'S TO BISHOP ROBERT BRAYBROKE, WHO DIED IN 1404.

He is notable for having endeavoured to put an end to the buying and selling and other scandalous misuses to which the cathedral nave was put.

(*From the engraving by Hollar.*)

scandal. In spite of this effort, the condition of affairs in the nave before long became as bad as before, the citizens having, it would appear, determined to regard this portion of their noble cathedral as something of a covered recreation hall and market.

None of Braybroke's successors to the end of the mediaeval period are especially notable as regards London, but John Kemp, Chancellor of England, obtained celebrity elsewhere. He was considered "one of the wisest lords of the land,"[1] and had the extraordinary distinction of being in turn Bishop of London, Archbishop of York, and Archbishop of Canterbury as well as a Cardinal-Bishop of the church. His nephew, Thomas Kemp, who became Bishop of London in 1450, was a quiet, peaceful man, whose chief distinction was that he succeeded in holding the office for no less than thirty-nine agitated years, and after seeing the deposition and death of his first king, Henry VI., lived on still as Bishop of London, right through the Yorkish period, dying in the reign of Henry VII.—almost, it would appear, an episcopal counterpart of the vicar of Bray. During his tenure of office Thomas Kemp carried out much repairing of the fabric of St Paul's and restored the famous cross which was the natural rallying point of the Londoners in times of emergency as well as a popular open-air pulpit. It was Kemp's magnificent restoration which changed the cross from its simple form into an elaborate pulpit.

A comprehensive view of the records of the city shows its inhabitants to be by no means irreligious in practice, although there was no doubt a certain element of indifference and unbelief, and what seems to-day to be an extraordinary amount of disregard for the sanctity of sacred edifices. Possibly the last is explained by the fact that in the Middle Ages the church was more of an

[1] *Paston Letters*, 226.

integral part of everyday life than it is at the present time, and thus extreme familiarity produced a certain modicum of contempt, especially in cases where the priests did not maintain a high ideal of Christian conduct. That the merchant princes and the official classes of the city were inclined to take their religion seriously is shown by such instances as the adjournment to the Guildhall Chapel for solemn mass on the days when the mayors were elected, the founding of chantries by various men of consequence, and the establishment of charitable institutions of a semi-religious character from Rahere in Norman times down to Whittington and his successors.

Further evidence of the attitude of the city towards practical religion is found in the various attempts to suppress vice. The vigorous action of such mayors as John of Northampton could hardly have been carried on without the support of the best public opinion, and although the reforming ideas of Wycliffe did not originate in the city, they found in it strong support: the statement of Langland that he dressed himself like a Lollard suggests numerous adherents to the heresy.

CHAPTER XIII

THE EXTERNAL APPEARANCE OF MEDIAEVAL LONDON

At the opening of the period described in these pages London was architecturally the Roman city of Londinium. It stood within its bastion-studded walls perhaps very little changed from the outward aspect it had presented at the end of the fourth century. Curtain walls and bastions were mainly of grey Kentish ragstone banded with courses of the usual thin Roman red or yellowish-red brick: the massive square-towered gateways were doubtless of the same materials.

The timber bridge, so far as may be inferred, still linked the city with its transpontine suburb, but it is more than likely that Southwark had by this time begun to suffer and become deserted. As the danger from the Anglo-Saxon invader increased its inhabitants would have been more and more inclined to seek homes within the walls, and that it may have been sacked soon after the defeat of the Romano-British forces on the Cray in 457 is very probable. But if the suburbs became deserted, it is not necessary to think that the strongly walled city deteriorated in like manner. It is quite possible that the Romano-British population kept not only the all-important defensive wall in good repair far into the fifth century, but that the public and private buildings did not show much sign of decay for a generation or more after the severance of Britain from the central government of the Western Roman Empire. When, through loss of trade and the decay and general impoverishment caused by the chaotic state of the surrounding country, the disrepair increased beyond the capacity of the citizens to cope with it, one has to accept the fact that the material fabric of Roman London was

beginning the first stages of its process of disintegration. But the Roman style of building was notoriously massive : the materials used were of the best, and it is thus impossible to imagine any rapid disappearance of the solidly built temples, basilicas, official residences, warehouses, offices and the better types of private houses and shops. The streets too, constructed, as is known, on an almost indestructible foundation, would have endured in spite of inadequate attention. All this leads one to believe that up to 851, when the Danes sacked the city, it is probable that Anglicised Londinium presented to the eye a very Roman aspect and if, through lack of experienced builders and the cessation of brick-making, the necessary repairs had been poorly carried out, yet it should not be forgotten that there were, by the seventh century, craftsmen capable of excellent masonry in various parts of England. One has only to consider the early work in Hexham Abbey, at Ripon and the churches of Monkwearmouth and Bradford-on-Avon to realise that stone-masons were available for excellent ashlar only a very few generations after the supposed destruction of all capacity for sound architectural construction in Anglo-Saxon England.

No doubt there was a great deal of re-using of Roman building materials : one sees this at Canterbury and on every site where early churches have been found, and Roman bricks must have been regarded as so valuable that one can easily imagine how the walls of a roofless building would be demolished to obtain from it the precious bricks as well as the stone for rubble walls and such tiles as were unbroken. In this way would many of the smaller structures have disappeared, probably to within a foot or two of their foundations. When the shrinkage of the population had ceased, and new sites for houses were required, it is more than probable that the new wooden structures arose from grass-grown uneven

ground with little or no disturbance of the buried lower portions of Roman walls.

It would seem, therefore, that throughout the period prior to Alfred, London presented a curious mixture of patched and repaired Romano-British buildings and of timber-framed houses, shops and warehouses (many of them thatched) put up by the mixed population which had succeeded that of the first half of the fifth century. Four hundred years had doubtless wrought many changes on the face of the city, but until the disaster of the ninth century described elsewhere,[1] there seems no reason to suppose that the main streets and more important buildings were much changed from what they had been four hundred years earlier. Certainly the defensive wall endured as long, even if decayed on the river front, for the bulk of it endured up to the eighteenth century and much exists to-day. Frequent fires, natural decay without adequate repair, and the savagery of the Viking warriors seem to have accounted for the disappearance of a great deal of the ancient city architecture of the classic period.

When, after the sack by the Danes, Alfred repaired the walls and revived the city's life by introducing colonists from the countryside, there doubtless quickly arose among and upon the ruins of houses of brick and stone, whole streets of rude half-timbered dwellings, roofed with thatch or wooden shingles. These inflammable materials were commonly used until the end of the twelfth century and accounted for the widespread fires which helped to destroy the last vestiges of the ancient glories of London's streets.

One would like to know to what extent the great houses, churches and smaller dwellings were provided with glazed windows in the period before the twelfth century, but archæology gives no clue, and written

[1] See p. 34.

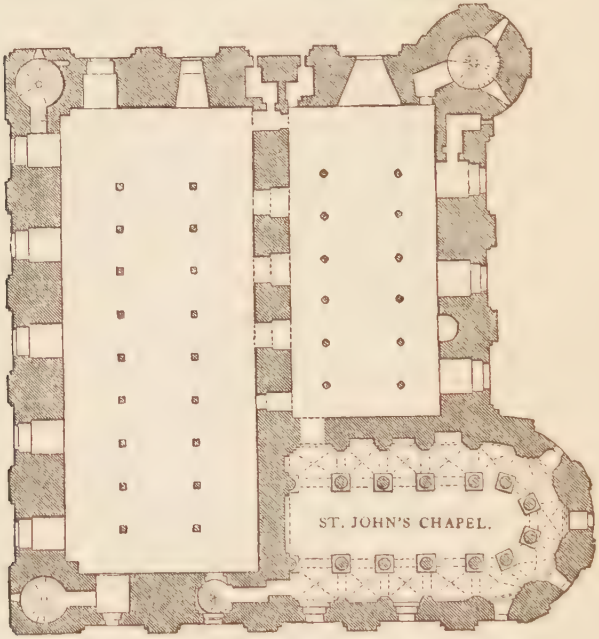
records only show that by the thirteenth century glass-making was a living industry in England. Soon after 1200 one begins to find references to a glass factory at Chiddingfold near Haslemere in Surrey. This may have been in existence for some considerable time and its principal market must have been London. Remarkably fine amber and green glass tumblers of curious design are found in Anglo-Saxon graves and according to good authorities[1] these show advanced technique of Roman character. The archæological difficulty thus presented may be avoided by the suggestion that these vessels were brought from a factory on the Rhine, for it is known that in 675 Benedict Biscop sent from Monkwearmouth for glass and glass workers to Frankland, and in 758 Cuthbert, Abbot of Jarrow, wrote to the same effect to St Lull, Archbishop of Maintz, " because the English are ignorant and helpless [in this art]." The fact that right down to the fourteenth century the great English cathedral builders were in the habit of obtaining superior glass for painting from France, gives the impression that England remained, at least up till that date, dependent upon the Continent for the finer qualities.

If the ecclesiastics in the north of England knew of and used the glass made at Cologne and in its neighbourhood, London must have equally had this information, and as Abbot Cuthbert so pathetically states that his own countrymen were ignorant of glass-making—at least for church windows—one must infer that the manufacture, if any, was in a very rudimentary condition. In Anglo-Saxon times horn was undoubtedly used in place of glass to a great extent and surviving Roman glass of the heavier kind would have found its way into many a window frame. Asser's life of Alfred is evidence that glass and horn were both used in the ninth century. He writes of fine white

[1] A. Nesbitt, F.S.A., H. J. Powell, F.C.S.

ox-horn being shaved so thin as to be as transparent as glass.

Of fireplaces and methods of warming the palace and the average house one has little information until the eleventh century. There is a fireplace with a flue in



PLAN OF THE SECOND FLOOR OF THE KEEP OR ORIGINAL TOWER OF LONDON.

In the hall on the right or east side appears the semi-circular recess of a fireplace.

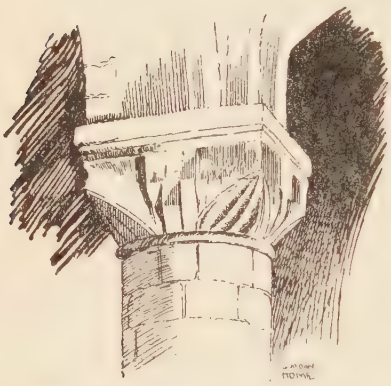
the thickness of the wall in the keep of the Tower of London which may be attributed to 1078 or soon afterwards, and chimneys were common in London before the end of the thirteenth century. In spite of this, an ordinary method of warming a room, or even a hall, was by means of a brazier whose smoke and fumes escaped through a vent in the roof. As late as 1570 the

hall of the Middle Temple was built with no other method of heating than this.

Towards the end of the Anglo-Saxon period the native architecture of London was beginning to develop in the direction of beauty and stateliness. How far this was directly influenced by Normandy is doubtful. Probably a good deal of the work was indigenous, for such existing examples of this period as the churches of Earl's Barton, Sompting, Deerhurst, and several others show that English art was recovering from the blight of the Danish invasions. If further specimen were needed, it may surely be found in Eadward the Confessor's abbey church at Westminster, which was so splendid and imposing that it sufficed for all ceremonies of state and satisfied the taste of the Norman and Angevin kings for two centuries. It should be remembered that it was commenced some twenty years before the Abbaye aux Hommes at Caen, and was contemporary with the abbey church of Jumièges. The architecture of the undercroft of the dormitory which survives, shows that the English masons of the eleventh century had nothing to learn from Continental craftsmen: the workmanship may even be considered superior to the somewhat crude masonry of the Norman cathedral at Winchester. Indeed, when one has compared Edward's work at Westminster with this and recalls that not until the time of the royal artist, Henry III., was any attempt made to replace it, it is rather difficult to avoid the feeling that "Norman" is perhaps quite a misnomer when applied to an English school of architecture. There was certainly a great burst of building activity in London during the Norman period, but this was due to necessity, not to any inborn enthusiasm. The newcomers continued contentedly to use the "Saxon" buildings until the city was devastated by fire. The inference is that they found them quite satisfactory: it is indeed open

to question whether Normandy in 1066 with the possible exception of Jumièges could show any church superior to St Paul's or so fine as Westminster.

The first Norman structure of any consequence to be reared in London after the Conquest was the Tower, and it is quite impossible to deny that it is the plainest military form of construction imaginable. Even the little chapel of St John with its twelve slightly enriched capitals and moulded bases[1] is certainly no evidence of any advance in artistic skill. The ambitious bulk of this and other Norman buildings of the period is obvious, but they can claim little else.



One of the least Ornate Capitals of the Columns in the Chapel of St John, in the Keep of the Tower of London.

There is no reason to suppose that very much change took place in the appearance of London for the first twenty years after the Conquest. Whether William inspired the city with any ideas for improving the paving or draining the streets or any architectural enterprise is not known, but as he spent very little of his time in London, it need not be regarded as a likely supposition.

One is on more certain ground after the great fires of 1077 and 1087. These successive disasters set building in motion, and it is more than probable that very marked changes took place, if not to any great extent in the lay out of streets, certainly in their appearance. With some confidence one can date from this time a number

[1] Some of the enrichment of the capitals may have been added much later.

of substantial Norman churches of which some features survive to-day, including the fine crypt of St Mary-le-Bow in Cheapside.

During the next fifty years there is no doubt at all of the steady growth in the embellishment of the city by the addition or rebuilding of churches, monasteries, and civic or semi-civic buildings. The second fire ruined the pre-Conquest St Paul's and brought about the magnificent reconstruction by Bishop Maurice; about 1117 the Leper Hospital, with the notable feature of a round-tower to its church, was erected in the Aldwych suburb;[1] about 1090 the church of St Giles was raised just outside Cripplegate, and almost at the same time the archiepiscopal palace of Lambeth with its private chapel was begun by Baldwin. Yet another great Norman architectural achievement arose just outside the walls of the city, soon after 1123, when the Norman style was fully developed. This was the priory founded by Rahere and dedicated to St Bartholomew. Although only the nave and parts of the transepts of the great church have come safely through the intervening eight centuries, they are quite sufficient to impress upon the mind the solemn dignity achieved by that time.

In addition to the churches, secular buildings of more or less importance, notably the castles of Baynard and of Montfichet in the south-west angle of the city, were being reared. What civic buildings were in use during the Norman period and whether any of them were rebuilt after the two great fires is unknown, and the same has to be admitted in regard to the houses of the more notable citizens. Seeing that of late there had been a considerable increase of wealth owing to the *pax Normannia* of seventy years' duration and the resulting expansion of commerce, there would have been much building by citizens of position. It is known

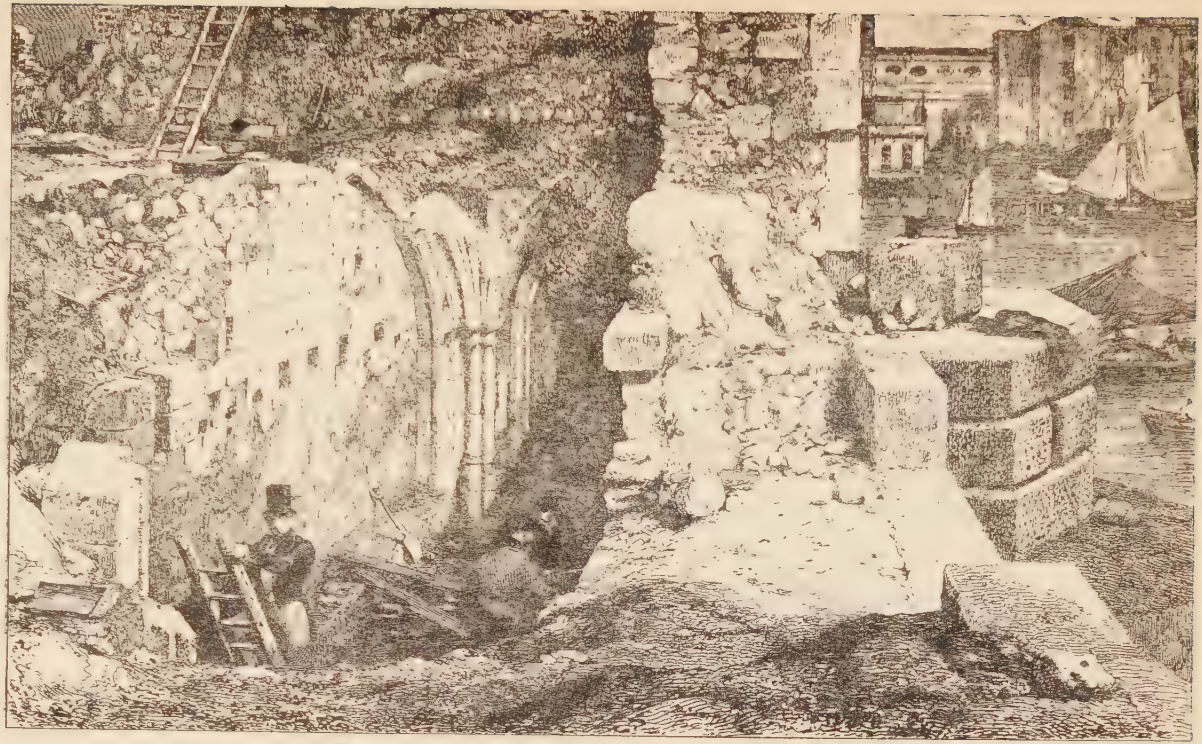
[1] See p. 309.

that during this period the single hall type of house was giving way to a more complex abode wherein appear the solar, kitchen, buttery, pantry, larder, and wardrobe, with perhaps an oratory.

During the greater part of the Plantagenet period, London being at peace, there is not much doubt that there was a progressive, if slow, improvement in the domestic building of the city and a great increase in splendour in the ecclesiastical architecture. The building regulations generally associated with the name of Mayor Fitz-Ailwyne (1191-1206) indicate that much attention was being paid to good construction and adequate guttering and cesspools. Party-walls of stone were to be three feet in thickness and cupboard recesses were not to be cut to a greater depth on either side than one foot. "Ancient lights" could only be claimed when adequate warning had been given.

Although not very much information is available as to changes on the outward face of London during the reigns of Henry II. and his sons, it was in this period that, for the first time in its history, a stone bridge linked the city with its southern suburb. Slowly and laboriously, this very remarkable Gothic structure grew to completeness, occupying in its building nearly as long a time as the present St Paul's. Almost at once it began to cover itself with wooden houses which were bracketed out on either side in a most picturesque fashion. On the east side of the central pier arose a graceful little Early English chapel, standing upon an undercroft which was brought to light when the bridge was destroyed in 1832.

In the reign of Henry III. who, whatever his demerits as a ruler, was undoubtedly a lover of art, there was a marked increase in the architectural eminence of London. The advent of the pointed arch and the development of sculptural ornament gave the archi-



PART OF THE SUB-STRUCTURE OR UNDERCROFT OF THE CHAPEL OF ST THOMAS ON OLD LONDON BRIDGE.

Revealed during the destruction of the historic structure in 1832. From the evidence which exists the Chapel was a very beautiful little example of Early English Gothic.

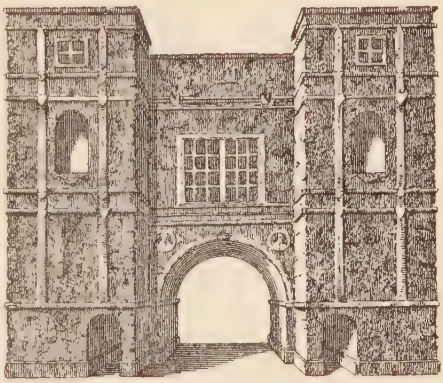
(*From an engraving made from a drawing by Edward W. Cooke.*)

tects an astonishing impetus. Throughout Western Europe an immense amount of rebuilding and remodelling was put in hand and some of the finest survivals of mediaeval London date from this time. In the beginning of the period the beautiful Early English chancel was added to the Transitional rotunda of the Temple church and Peter des Roches replaced the burnt-out ruin of St Mary Overie in Southwark, with the noble church of which the most important parts remain to-day. Contemporaneously with the erection of the Temple church, the Knights of St John were raising at Clerkenwell a church of similar plan to that of their rival on the bank of the Thames. Numerous other churches were being built or else reconstructed in the new style. The Great Fire has obliterated most of them, but there remain slight indications of the nunnery of St Helen, Bishopsgate, the arcades of All Hallow's, Barking, and the chapel of the Primate's palace at Lambeth. Greater far than any of these was the magnificent edifice inspired by Henry III. to replace the eastern parts of Eadward the Confessor's abbey church at Westminster.

The Londoners, learning of the ambitious plans of reconstruction on Thorney Island, could hardly allow their own fane to be eclipsed in this manner and, at about the same time, proceeded to the task of remodelling St Paul's. The canons rebuilt and lengthened by nine bays the eastern member, erecting upon a very beautiful undercroft an Early English choir, the details of which, including the huge eastern rose window, have been preserved in Hollar's fine drawings. They made slight alterations to the transepts, crowned the Norman nave with stone vaulting and, over the crossing, raised the Early English tower which was destined to form the most conspicuous feature of the outline of London for over four hundred years. The wooden spire was

not completed until 1315 and was destroyed by lightning in 1561.

Up to this time the great "White Tower" of the Conqueror had stood within the enceinte whose defences were built by William Rufus. These were now to give way to a new wall-ring strengthened by a number of massive towers, the erection of which, as already mentioned, produced no good impression upon the minds of the citizens.



ALDGATE AS IT APPEARED ABOUT 1759.

How far this gate was an ancient structure, patched and remodelled, is not known, but from its main outlines and the roughness of the stonework, it may have been very ancient, and possibly in part Roman.

Of London's great walls, it is known from Fitz-Stephen, that there were in it seven double gates. These were Ludgate, Newgate, Aldersgate, Cripplegate, Moorgate, Bishopsgate, and Aldgate. One cannot overlook his plain reference to double openings. As rebuilt in later times this feature is entirely absent, and it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that, in the thirteenth century, they were simply the Roman gates repaired or remodelled. There is nothing in the least improbable in this, for at Lincoln and Colchester Roman gateways exist to this day.

The maintenance of the city's bridges, pavements, waterways, river walls, and the gateways figures in the earliest city records. The Letter Books, which begin in the first years of Edward I., show that the question of the repair of bridges, paving, and so on was frequently

before the council, and by that time the Pavage toll was in force. Evidently all sorts of low, overhanging structures and projecting gutters impeded the passage of riders in the narrow streets: the orders becoming more and more emphatic as to a clearance of nine feet: any pentice or "jettee" at a lower height was liable to be removed. The "ale-stakes," as they were called, *e.g.* tavern poles from which hung the sign or bunch of leaves, were restricted to a length of seven feet, having become in the reign of Richard II. a hindrance to riders and others owing to their excessive length and weight, which endangered the stability of the taverns.

At about the same time as the orders in regard to pentices, and onwards to 1380, there are references to the repaving of Aldgate and Holborn and the ways without Cripplegate, Bishopsgate, Aldersgate, and Aldgate. In 1307 men were elected and sworn for making pavements; later come orders of a wholesale character for the mending of all pavements and efforts were made about the same time to stop the practice of laying short lengths of paving in front of houses at different levels from those adjoining, so that foot passengers would not be impeded.

The somewhat embarrassing habit of throwing dirty water and rubbish out of windows was punishable by an order made about 1375. These and a hundred other indications of the need for regulating individualism in regard to the street fronts of private property enable one to form pictures of the mediaeval streets of London wherein progress on foot in daylight was not without difficulty, and on horseback was far less easy, while after dusk, or when a fog shrouded the city, the going was full of unseen dangers. If one successfully skirted the heaps of dung and chips,[1] there were the unevennesses

[1] The accumulations of chips in the streets were doubtless due to the cutting up of firewood before taking it indoors.

of the paving to avoid, the sudden alterations of height and the slipperiness due to unswept filth. Add to this the low overhanging pentices, the stalls, tavern-signs, the unguarded ways into cellars and basements and, in wet weather, the spouting gutters, and the streamlets and pools of water, and no one need be surprised at the many attempts to force householders to obey the regulations. The streets of Elizabethan London suffered, it would seem, from many of the inconveniences of the Middle Ages, for until 1666, and even later, the citizens favoured the Thames boatmen largely to avoid the inconveniences of the narrow ways.

Those who lived in the days of our grandfathers must have known many byways in the towns and older cities of England which still bore the atmosphere of mediaeval times. The engravings and aquatints produced early in last century show how many romantically beautiful old fragments of the Middle Ages were still in being at that time, so that it is not impossible to reconstruct in imagination the streets of at least the latter part of the fifteenth century. Even to-day at Canterbury, York, Winchester, and especially in some of the smaller towns, there are byways of mediaevalism which, though somewhat over-restored, are probably very good guides as to London's streets before the Renaissance. It is just possible that Stonegate, in York, or parts of Tewkesbury's main street may present somewhat the aspect of the thoroughfares of fifteenth-century Cornhill or Cheapside. The better houses were doubtless enriched with much sculptured ornament on beams, brackets, gable-ends, and doorways, and it should not be forgotten that the mediaeval love of colour led to the painting of external as well as internal woodwork. Wrought-iron brackets and poles supporting lamps and curious signs added picturesque details to the perspectives; and, as no street followed a straight course for

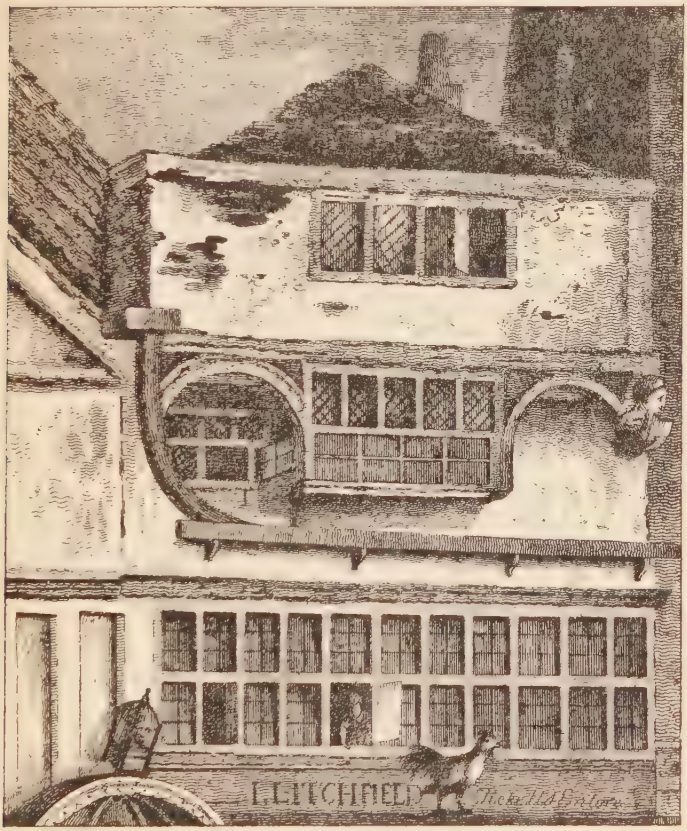
many yards at a time, there were always attractive corners, with, beyond them, glimpses of huddled groups of gables, often diversified by church towers or other stone buildings.

The Guildhall, Leadenhall, the halls of the Gilds and the city gates were by the fifteenth century built of stone with all the skill of the masons of the Perpendicular period of Gothic architecture: the same is probably true in regard to the principal portions of the town houses of the great nobles and the mansions of the wealthier citizens, although, no doubt, they were in part constructed in the picturesque timber-framed style which one finds in conjunction with stone in such country houses as Ightham Mote and Knole. Doubtless the majority of these were still adorning the city when the Great Fire robbed England of some of its choicest examples of urban construction. The hall of one exists to-day.[1] There is an interesting record in 1381 as to the building of an addition to the town house of Sir Robert Knolles, who was given permission to construct a hall fourteen feet in height which would imply a considerable amount of state with a dignified interior.

Among the city records of the reign of Edward II. there is a remarkable document specifying the additions to be made to an old house for one William de Hanigtone as described on page 281. The contractor was a carpenter named Simon de Canterbury, and it is therefore clear that this house was of timber. The whole of the work was to be carried out down to such matters as locks to the doors for the sum of £9, 5s. 4d. sterling (about £150 in 1914), fifty Eastern marten-skins, fur for a woman's hood (valued at 5s.), and fur for a robe for Simon himself. After the completion of the work it is to be presumed that on Sundays and great occasions the master carpenter and his lady walked abroad clad in

[1] See p. 235.

fur-lined and fur-bordered garments. Part payment in kind was not at all uncommon in the Middle Ages,



THE UPPER PORTION OF A HOUSE IN LEADENHALL STREET WHICH WAS STANDING IN 1811.

The architectural features suggest a date prior to the Renaissance.

and owing to the scarcity of specie was a general convenience.

The description of what Simon of Canterbury built

for the wealthy skinner is highly interesting. There was to be a hall with an "oriole" beyond the high bench and a room with a chimney separated from each other by a larder; above the last two a solar or upper room was to be constructed. There was also to be another "oriole"[1] with a step "from the ground to the door of the hall" and beneath it were two enclosures as cellars. Elsewhere a stable and a sewer with two pipes leading to it were to be made between the hall and the old kitchen, with a solar above the stable and above all a garret. At one end of the solar was to be added a kitchen with a chimney, and between the hall and "the old chamber" another "oriole" was to be built—in this case one may imagine a passage with windows in it. All the work had to be carried out between November 11 and the following Easter, which suggests speedy craftsmen, who would have made the very most of short hours of daylight and carried on in spite of rain and frost.

Nearly half a century later, when Edward III. had been king for a generation and more, a glimpse is given in the Letter Books[2] of materials employed in repairing a house on Cornhill, their cost and of the wages paid. The tiler received 7d. per day and his assistant 5d., with drinks costing 2d. For 500 tiles 4s. was paid. A cartload of sand cost 4d., 6 sacks of lime 12d., 4 cartloads of paving stone came to 10s. and 3 cartloads of sand 12d. From the various trades employed and the materials used it is clear that the house concerned was of timber with a tiled roof, and that the walls were made of lath and plaster fixed to the wood framing.

In 1317 Adam le Plastrer was paid £24 sterling for finishing within and without in plaster of Paris the walls

[1] The description is obscure: it may mean a small room, a porch, or a bay window.

[2] G, folio 83.

of the hall of the Earl of Richmond's town house in a space of eight weeks, for which he gave surety, his royal employer (a cousin of Edward II.) having paid in advance.

Chimneys had, since the reign of Edward II., been made of stone, tiles, or plaster, timber being forbidden under pain of being pulled down. It is more than probable that as soon as houses began to be of more than one floor the chimney became less and less of a rarity.

Although thatch was forbidden for roofing as far back as the reign of John, one finds in the time of Edward II. a reference to the provision by the reputable men of the wards and the aldermen of strong iron crooks provided with wooden handles, each having two chains and strong cords. These suggest the poles headed with hooks for pulling down burning thatch still to be seen at Thaxted in Essex and other places, but their purpose at this time was the dragging away of any burning materials.

London possessed so many churches, collegiate foundations, and monasteries in the height of its mediaeval greatness that it would have been difficult at any point in the city to be out of sight of one or two and ofttimes more of these ecclesiastical buildings, while beautiful glimpses of the Gothic tower and slender spire of St Paul's would have been obtained from many of the streets leading towards the mighty fane.

Adjoining buildings doubtless crowded up to the churches, and thus the east end of a chancel, the west end of a nave, or merely a towered porch may have been all that the passer-by would notice of a fine structure. It was not until after the Reformation that façades were allowed to be encroached upon by shops; those still to be seen on the west end of St Ethelburga's in Bishopsgate did not appear until 1570, when London was getting

too great for its Roman husk and was breaking out into new suburbs on all sides.

Of the architecture of the eighty-nine churches destroyed in the Great Fire one can say nothing with precision, but judging from the nineteen which still exist wholly or in part within and without the walls, it is fairly easy to make certain broad statements. All the periods of architecture would have been represented, and, as the oldest and most important portion of the city was burnt, it is quite possible that very early examples of Saxon Romanesque work and even Roman reconstructions were standing in the Middle Ages. The standard of workmanship was high and the monuments were of fine quality.

In regard to mere size, old crowded London was able to find space for a church—that of Austin Friars—whose nave was 83 feet in width, while Exeter Cathedral is only 70, and even that of Winchester is but 80. In length this nave exceeds that of Exeter by 13 feet, and is only 8 feet less than Canterbury.

For other dimensions the surviving churches can be taken: beyond them one is thrown back upon the sites of those rebuilt, and these justify the statement that a considerable proportion were sufficiently large to have been both dignified and impressive. If All Hallows, Barking, be taken as a fair representative of a parish church, one finds a nave sufficiently broad and long to give a feeling of spaciousness, while for the size of the smallest churches, St Ethelburga's may be regarded as a good guide. It is only 54 feet by 25. Of the monastic churches, St Bartholomew-the-Great's noble fragment presents the twentieth-century Londoner with an atmosphere of massive magnificence which tells him something of the vastly larger St Paul's, whose Norman nave withstood, to a great extent, even the fiery ordeal of 1666.

The beautiful church of St Helen, Bishopsgate, half-monastic, half-parochial is, one may believe, typical of the larger churches of the city. It represents all the periods of Gothic, and is spacious and dignified within, if lacking distinction in its external features. In the chancel, and on the walls of both of the naves, the numerous fine monuments bearing effigies of Londoners from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century give an idea of what was lost in regard to the portraiture, genealogy, costume, and other personal details of the wealthier families of the city. To walk through the aisles of the fine Decorated church of Austin Friars (now the Dutch Church) is to tread upon many slabs of stone, still showing by their vacant matrices how many memorials in brass were placed in the churches; and from those which still survive in the city, one knows that these must have formed an important feature of the sepulchral monuments.

For the Norman period, and the transition to Gothic, there is the Temple Church to remind one of the high enrichment of doorways which marked this time; a feature doubtless well represented in the heart of the mediaeval city. There seems every reason to suppose that the Early English style was equally if not more fully exemplified.

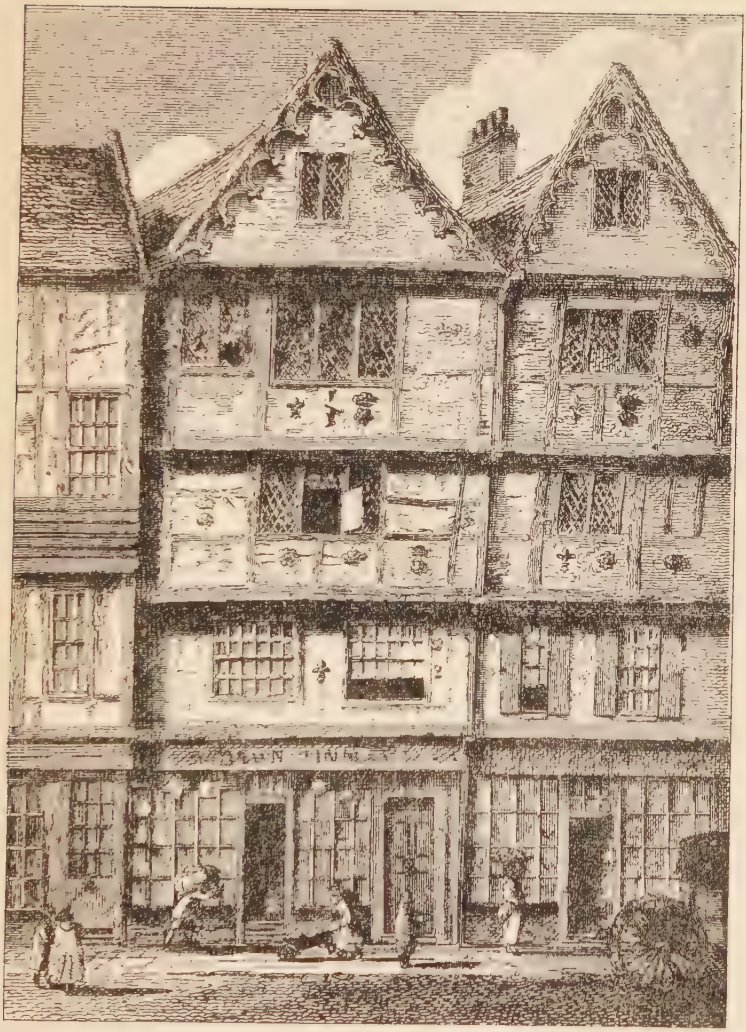
That church building was still in progress in the Decorated period is evidenced by the chapels of St Helen's, Bishopsgate, the tower of St Alphege's, London Wall, and the windows of the Austin Friars' church. When the last development of Gothic architecture was flourishing mediaeval London was wealthier than it had been since Roman times, and the founding and rebuilding of churches as well as civic and private structures proceeded with great zest: one might be forgiven for saying in a hasty review that the pre-Reformation churches of London are all of that period, *e.g.* Per-

pendicular, for nine of them are more or less completely, and three others partially, built in that style.[1]

One of the most tragic features of the Great Fire was the entire destruction of the most ancient nucleus of London. In that core stood the greatest of the civic edifices, and if the walls of the Guildhall had not resisted the flames there would be no example extant of such a building of the Middle Ages. Owing to the mask of eighteenth-century masonry placed in front of it, the average Londoner does not realise that behind that wretched screen is the mutilated Perpendicular façade belonging to the opulent days of Whittington and Carpenter. The beautifully-vaulted entrance remains intact, grey, and bearing evidence of the passing of five centuries—half a millennium of eventful years in the story of London. From the old drawing reproduced here, it will be seen how fully in keeping was this vestibule with the highly enriched Gothic exterior, with its six finely balanced niches in the panelled walls.

There can be little doubt that the richest citizens, whose resources compared with those of Sir John Crosby were, like him, desirous of possessing a house of similar grace and splendour, and if this can be said of merchant princes, it may be that the baronage were not far behind in rebuilding their town houses. In fact it can be asserted with confidence that fifteenth-century London was busy re-edifying itself on a finer and more elaborate scale at the period when Gothic domestic architecture was at its zenith. The woodwork has vanished but, if the contemporary examples to be seen at Ipswich, Coventry, Grantham, and many other places be taken as a guide, it is safe to say that the more important streets of mediaeval London in its later years must have been a veritable pageant of architectural delights.

[1] See Appendix.



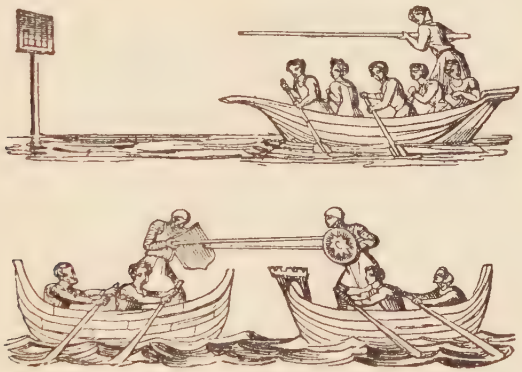
Late Mediaeval Houses in Butcher Row, Temple Bar.

On its water front London's picturesqueness must at all times have been notable, but after its timber bridge had been superseded by the stone structure of Peter de Colechurch, the riverside aspects became increasingly attractive. Within a decade of its completion, the stone bridge began to carry wooden houses, and age by age down to the eighteenth century the sagging Gothic arches, widened on both sides until the edifice was thrice its original width, supported an increasing superstructure. The timber-framed houses formed a continuous street, except where broken by the chapel and the two gatehouses: there were shops with dwellings above them, and all sorts of manufactures were carried on in what, in course of time, became very crazy tenements which overhung the water precariously. There is only one drawing of London Bridge which can be called mediaeval, and this is possibly later than 1485. It is, however, sufficiently near the date to be a fair guide as to the appearance of the bridge in the last years of what are termed the Middle Ages. Unfortunately, it only shows the northern half and the chapel: for the gateways one has to depend upon Wyngaerde (*circa* 1550) and Ralph Aggas (*circa* 1560), but it may well be that they had not changed since the previous century or for a much longer period. The main gateway, separated from the chapel by four arches crowded with an amazing medley of wooden houses, was a solidly-built structure apparently of stone,[1] above whose battlements rose those tall iron spikes which so often bore grisly human trophies. One does not know for how many months or years a traitor's head would

[1] From Aggas's drawing the towers appear to be of stone, but that of Wyngaerde leaves one a little uncertain. This gateway was in Tudor times replaced by the famous Nonsuch gatehouse—a timber structure. After its erection the heads of traitors were placed on the southernmost gateway over the second pier from the Southwark end.

remain on its iron support : it may have been blown off during gales or perhaps fell to pieces through being shaken and rattled against its post. Illustrations are inclined to show four or five heads at once, but it is difficult to know how the supply of traitors and others could have been sufficiently maintained !

There was no arch on the south side of the gateway, the piers being only united when the drawbridge was



WATER SPORTS IN THE MIDDLE AGES.
Tilting in boats and a water quintain.
(*From a contemporary illuminated MS.*)

down.[1] After two more picturesque groups of wooden houses came another gateway, and then for the rest of the distance to Southwark the road was almost entirely closed in with wooden houses until, at the very end of the bridge, one passed through the southern gateway and found oneself outside the jurisdiction of the City of London.

Was there anything in the length and breadth of England to compare with the picturesqueness of London's amazing bridge ? Can one be surprised at visitors

[1] The drawbridge fulfilled the double purpose of defence and allowing vessels to pass up the river to Queenhithe, Dowgate, and elsewhere.

coming from the Continent bent on seeing that wonder? The sights and sounds, the jostling and bargaining, the amusing incidents which one would see during the few minutes it occupied to traverse, must have been varied and full of interest at every yard. There was a market in one portion and somewhere else a sufficiently large space for the holding of a joust![1]

How many folk crowded on to those twenty arches when there were water sports who can guess, but one can imagine that there would be few who would not try to get such a fine position for witnessing the men in boats tilting at one another with lances. Windows in the creaking timber houses would be at a premium, and the unrecorded accidents which occurred on these gala occasions must have been numerous.

In the Pool below the bridge lay the vessels which carried the sea-borne trade of London, many of them, at any rate by the fourteenth century, carrying three masts, and with a growing complication of standing and running rigging. There can be little doubt that the hulls of the vessels which went on longer voyages were brightly painted, and thus afforded, as the funnels of tramp steamers do to some extent to-day, a foreground full of colour. The Thames, even at the close of the Middle Ages, was a clean river full of fish; it was greatly used as a source of supply for the markets, and the number of small boats upon its surface in the Pool and indeed between Greenwich and Westminster must have been great. The nets were often a nuisance to navigation.

Sufficient is known of mediaeval London, at least after the thirteenth century, to realise its extreme picturesqueness. It was a time when no one made mistakes in architecture, when all men seemed sub-

[1] See pp. 159-160. Perhaps the space used for the market was the same as that chosen for the joust.

consciously to produce what they required in wood, stone, and iron as though they had mastered the whole principles of art. Was this achieved by a painful apprenticeship or was it due to a highly developed and widespread sense of symmetry and proportion which came easily to the master-craftsman?

To whatever it was due, the beauty of everyday things at this time was entirely satisfying and thus one may picture London, despite its failings in sanitation, as a very delectable city, a compact hive of human industry and enterprise, working in the midst of colourful and admirably-designed surroundings. Sonorous bells pealed from the forest of steeples; their chimings and tollings were indeed a feature of the city's echoing activities until the ringing of the curfew sent all but a small proportion of the citizens to their beds.

A House with heavily overhanging Storeys, formerly standing in the Minories.

It was dated 1480 on a mantelpiece.

Closing time has come for the taverns, the merry-making cronies have called for the last time to the tapster, and as the familiar notes of the last bell of the day fall on their ears they are hurrying homewards.

A gleam of light lingers in the west, and between the high-pitched gables shows the silhouette of a graceful

church tower—clear cut against the pale primrose yellow which fades into the blue-black vault overhead. Here and there a bright band of light falls upon the uneven paving and elsewhere a sound of a sweet voice singing can be heard in the darkness. And so, as night falls and all the crude sounds of daylight are silenced, the curtain comes down on that wonderful London of the Middle Ages which is the parent of the vast and amazing city of to-day.

A CHRONOLOGY OF MEDIAEVAL LONDON

Note.—Until 1752 the official year was begun on March 25, and thus from Jan. 1 to that date events are given as belonging to the previous year. The Mayoral year ran from October to October.

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors, Portreeves, Justiciars, and Bishops.	Events.
457			British Army, defeated on the Cray, retreats to London.
560	Aethelberht, King of Kent		
	Candidianus, King of Roman Britain (?)		
572	Ceawlin, King of Wessex		
576			Aethelberht defeated by Ceawlin at Wibbandun (? Wimbledon).
578 (?)			Ceawlin subdues the Chiltern region, thus cutting off London from the independent Britons farther west.
582			Ceawlin overthrows Candidianus at Deorham. London probably capitulates to Gewissæ or Kentishmen.
596	Fall of Ceawlin		
	Aethelberht Overlord of Southern England		
597			Landing of Augustine.
604		**Mellitus, Bishop**	
616			Mellitus expelled from London.
633	Penda, King of Mercia		
655	Peada, King of Mercia		
656		**Cedd, Bishop**	(No evidence as to Cedd's authority over London.)
659	Wulfhere, King of Mercia		
665(?)		**Wini, Bishop**	
675	Aethelred, King of Mercia	**Waldhere, Bishop** (exact year uncertain, but before 680)	
679			Note by Bede of Frisian merchants at London.
685 *c.*		**Earconwald, Bishop**	
688	Ine, King of Wessex		
690			Ine gains possession of London(?).
693			{ London attached to Wessex. { " Earconwald my bishop " (Ine).
706		**Ingwald, Bishop**	
716	Aethelbald, King of Mercia		
726	Death of Ine		Aethelbald recovers London.
745		**Ecgwulf, Bishop**	
757	Offa, King of Mercia		
772		**Sigheard, Bishop**	
774		**Eadberht, Bishop**	
789		**Eadgar, Bishop**	
791		**Coenwealh, Bishop**	
794		{ **Eadbald, Bishop** { **Heathoberht, Bishop**	
796	Ecgferth, King of Mercia		
	Coenwulf, King of Mercia		
800	Ecgberht, King of Wessex		
802		**Osmund, Bishop**	
811		**Aethelnoth, Bishop**	

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors, Portreeves, Justiciars, and Bishops.	Events.
821	Ceolwulf, King of Mercia		
823	Beornwulf, King of Mercia		
824		**Ceolberht, Bishop**	
825	Ludican, King of Mercia		Beornwulf defeated by Ecgberht. London submits to Ecgberht.
827	Wiglaf, King of Mercia		
829	Ecgberht, King of England		Ecgberht conquers Mercia.
834			Vikings in Thames.
839	Aethelwulf, King of England		
842			Vikings attack London (?).
851			**VIKINGS SACK LONDON.** Vikings defeated at Aclea (? Ockley).
854			Vikings winter in Sheppey.
855			Vikings raid Mercia.
858	Aethelbald		
860	Aethelberht	**Deorwulf, Bishop** **Swithwulf, Bishop**	
865			Vikings ravage Kent.
866	Aethelred I.		Vikings invade England.
871	Alfred		Vikings attack Wessex.
872			Vikings under Halfdene winter in London. Viking coinage.
876			Vikings attack Wessex.
878			Alfred defeats Vikings, who settle in Danelagh, which included London.
885			Viking raid defeated by Alfred.
886 (?)		**Heahstan, Bishop**	Alfred recovers London and places it under Ealdorman Aethelred of Mercia.
892			Great Danish Invasion.
893			Londoners defeat Danes at Bemfleet and capture their fleet.
894			New Danish fleet in Lea.
895			Londoners defeated in attempt to storm Danish Camp. Arrival of Alfred. Capture of second Danish fleet.
896			Danes driven from England.
898		**Wulfsige, Bishop**	
899–900	Eadward I.		Alfred holds a council at Chelsea.
910			Death of Ealdorman Aethelred. King Eadward takes London under direct control.
924	Aethelstan		
926		**Theodred, Bishop**	
935(?)		Aelfeah Stybb or Brithnoth Oddason, Portreeve (?)	The *Judicia Civitatis Lundoniæ*.
940	Eadmund I.		
946	Eadred		
953		**Brythelm, Bishop**	
955	Eadwig		
959	Eadgar	**Dunstan, Bishop**	
961		**Aelfstan, Bishop**	GREAT FIRE IN LONDON. (1st.) ST PAUL'S BURNT.
975	Eadward II.		
978	Aethelred II.		Queenhithe Dock formed and called Aethelredshythe. Riverside Roman defensive wall standing.
980			Danish attacks recommence.

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors, Portreeves, Justiciars, and Bishops.	Events.
982			GREAT FIRE IN LONDON. (2nd.)
992			Fleet collected at London. Bishop Aelfstan one of the Admirals.
994			**First Siege of London** by Olaf Tryggvesson and Sweyn Forkbeard of Denmark. Besiegers defeated.
996		**Wulfstan, Bishop**	Danish ravages.
1004		**Aelfhune, Bishop**	Danish ravages.
1009			London the refuge of the national fleet.
			Danes sack Oxford. London collects an army for its relief.
1012			Danes at Greenwich. Murder of Archbishop Aelfeah, whose body is given to Londoners. Aethelred takes Jarl Thorkill the Tall and his men into his service.
1013			**Second Siege of London** by Sweyn, who is repulsed by Thorkill. Sweyn abandons siege and subdues Wessex. Aethelred and Thorkill evacuate London, which submits to Sweyn. Aethelred flees to Normandy.
	Sweyn "Forkbeard"		
1014	Aethelred II. restored	**Aelfwig, Bishop**	Fighting with Cnut Sweynson.
1016	Eadmund II.		**Third Siege of London** by Cnut. Besieger repulsed. Siege raised by King Eadmund. England divided between Eadmund and Cnut. Death of Eadmund (? murdered by Eadric "Streona").
	Cnut the Dane		
1017			London raises 10,500 pounds of silver to pay off Cnut's mercenaries. Cnut executes Eadric "Streona."
1023			Cnut assists at the solemn transference of St Aelfeah's remains to Canterbury from London.
1028–35			Commercial prosperity of England, and pre-eminently of London, owing to unity of the North under Cnut.
1035	Harold I.	**Aelfward, Bishop**	Harold elected King by Northern Earls and by London.
1040	Harthacnut		Harold's body buried first at Westminster, then at St Clement Danes, London.
1042	Eadward III., "The Confessor"	Wulfgar, Portreeve	"All men chose Eadward as King in London."
1044		**Robert of Jumièges, Bishop**	
1050		**(Spearhafoc, Bishop)**	
1051		**William, Bishop**	Civil War. Earl Godwin of Wessex revolts against Eadward and his French friends. King and army in London. Godwin and his family exiled. William of Normandy visits Edward.

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors, Portreeves, Justiciars, and Bishops.	Events.
1052			Godwin returns. Armies meet at London. Godwin and his adherents reinstated and French prelates exiled. William of London shortly recalled.
1053			Death of Godwin. Earl Harold Godwinson practically Regent of England.
1054		Sweetman, Portreeve	
1056			Foundation of St Martin's le Grand.
1057			Prince Eadward, son of Eadmund II., died in London.
1063		Leofstan, Aelfsige } Portreeves	
1065			Dedication of Westminster Abbey Church on Dec. 28. King Eadward dying.
1066	Harold II.	Esegar the Staller, Sheriff	Jan. 5. Death of Eadward. Harold Godwinson elected King. William of Normandy prepares invasion. Harold's headquarters in London.
			May. Apparition of Halley's Comet.
			Sept. 28. William lands at Pevensey.
			Oct. 7. Harold in London.
			Dec. William enters London.
			Dec. 25. Coronation of William.
	William I.	(Gosfrigth, Portreeve =Geoffrey de Mandeville I.) Richard del Parc, Provost (Præpositus)	William confirms Londoners in their rights. Constructs a fort on site of the future Tower of London.
1075		**Hugh d'Orval, Bishop**	Ecclesiastical Council in St Paul's.
1077			GREAT FIRE IN LONDON. (3rd.)
1078			Building of Tower in stone.
1081			Foundation of Bermondsey Abbey.
1085		**Maurice, Bishop**	
1087	William II.		GREAT FIRE IN LONDON. (4th.) General rebuilding. Commencement of new Cathedral of St Paul.
			[gate.
1090			Foundation of St Giles's, Cripple-
1091			Great gale: Bridge damaged. William at London. Building of Westminster Hall and walls of the Tower enceinte.
1096–97			Execution of rebels. Forced labour and taxation on account of work on Tower, Bridge and Westminster Palace.
1099			Westminster Palace completed.
1100	Henry I.	Hugo de Boch (Bochland), Portreeve Leofstan, Præpositus	Death of Rufus. Henry I. crowned at Westminster by Bishop Maurice. Henry married at Westminster to Princess Maud.
1102			Great Church Council at Westminster.
1106			St Mary's Overie rebuilt.
1108		**Richard I. de Belmeis, Bishop**	Trinity Priory, Aldgate, founded.
1110			Great Comet.
1114			Thames frozen over.
1117			St Giles's in the Fields founded.
1118			Queen Maud died at Westminster.

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors, Portreeves, Justiciars, and Bishops.	Events.
1123			Canon Rahere founded St Bartholomew's Priory and Hospital.
1125		Aubrey de Vere, Portreeve (?) Robert de Becquerel (Berquereola), Justiciar	Cardinal Giovanni da Crema holds Church Council in London
1128		**Gilbert "Universalis," Bishop**	
1129			Church Council at London to enforce celibacy among clergy.
1130			Charter to London granting authority over Middlesex.
1132			GREAT FIRE IN LONDON. (5th.) St Paul's much damaged.
1135	Stephen		Death of Henry I. London, the Primate, the Justiciar, and the Bishop of Winchester elect Stephen of Blois.
1136		Andrew Buchuinte, Justiciar (?) Gilbert Becket, Vicecomes	GREAT FIRE IN LONDON. (6th.) St Paul's damaged.
1141		**Robert de Sigillo, Bishop** Osbert Huitdeniers, Justiciar	St Katherine's by the Tower Hospital and Priory founded.
1152		**Richard II. de Belmeis, Bishop** Gervase de Cornhill, Justiciar (*c.* 1153)	
1153			Stephen recognises as his heir Henry, grandson of Henry I. The two visit London.
1154	Henry II.	Peter Fitz-Walter, Vicecomes John Fitz-Nigel, Vicecomes	Royal Council at Bermondsey. **Weavers' Company's Charter.**
1163		**Gilbert Foliot, Bishop**	London Bridge reconstructed with timber as before.
1170		Arnulf Buchel, Vicecomes	Henry's son Henry crowned at Westminster.
1176			Commencement of stone Bridge.
1180(?)		William Fitz-Isabel, Vicecomes	St John's Priory, Clerkenwell, founded.
1184			German Embassy in London.
1185			Temple Church founded.
1189	Richard I.	**Richard Fitz Neal, Bishop** Henry Fitz Ailwyne (? 1189 or 1191), The First Mayor	Coronation of Richard. 1st Assize of Building.
1191			"Commune" of London established.
1193			Fitz Ailwyne, Treasurer of King's Ransom.
1196			Revolt of William Fitz-Osbert.
1197			St Mary's Hospital, Bishopsgate, founded.
1199	John	**William de Ste Mère l'Eglise, Bishop**	[Day.
1204			Severe winter, New Year to Lady
1206			Court of twenty-four Councillors. St Mary's Overie burnt. Rebuilt by Peter des Roches.
1207			Emperor Otho IV. in London.
1209			Completion of stone Bridge.
1210			St Helen's Nunnery founded.
1212		Roger Fitz Ailwyne [1st] succeeds Henry (*Stow*)	GREAT FIRE. (7th.) CASTLE BAYNARD BURNT. Assize of Building.
1213		Roger Fitz Ailwyne [2nd]	Great Meeting in St Paul's of disaffected clergy and barons. Ditch dug outside walls.
1214		Serlo le Mercer	
1215		William Hardell	MAGNA CARTA.
1216	Henry III.	James the Alderman Salomon de Basing	Dauphin Louis in London.
1217		Serlo le Mercer, to 1222	[land. Dauphin leaves London and Eng-

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors and Bishops.	Events.
1220	(Henry III., from 1216)	[The French Chronicle gives Richard Reinger (or Ranger) as Mayor in 1221 and for the next five years]	Rebuilding of Westminster Abbey commenced.
1221		**Eustace de Fauconberg, Bishop**	
1222		Richard Renger [1st], to 1227	Completion of St Paul's. Riots in London.
1224			Royal grant of Common Seal.
1226			Hunting privileges granted to London.
1227		Roger le Duc, to 1231	Franchise of London ratified.
1229		**Roger Niger, Bishop**	
1231		Andrew Bokerel (Pepperer), to 1237	
1232			Londoners aid King to overthrow Hubert de Burgh.
			1233, Parish Clerks' Company Charter.
1237		Andrew Bokerel (whence Bucklersbury), died Richard Renger [2nd]	Water supply from Tyburn to City. Expense partly defrayed by subscriptions from privileged merchants of Amiens, Corbey, and Nesle.
1238		Richard Renger died William le Joynour	
1239		William le Joynour	Mayor built choir of Greyfriars' Church.
1240		Gerard (? Richard) Bat Gerard Bat (resigned) Reginald de Bungey	Papal Legate Otho in London. New St Paul's dedicated. St Mary's Overie dedicated. Temple Church dedicated.
1241		Ralph Eswy [1st], 1240–1	Foundation of Whitefriars' Priory.
1242		Ralph Eswy [2nd]	
1243		Ralph Eswy [3rd]	
		Fulk Basset, Bishop	
1244		Michael Tovy [Tovy elected for a second year, but not admitted. No Mayor from January 13 to October 28]	Brewers rebuilt Cripplegate. Papal Collector Martin expelled.
1245		John de Gisors (Pepperer) [1st]	Savoy Palace built.
1246	The different version of the French Chronicle. Peter Fitz Alan, 1 year	John de Gisors (Pepperer) [2nd]	Londoners supply Pope with gold decorations.
1247	Michael Tovy, 2 years	Peter Fitz Ailwyne	Hospital of St Mary of Bethlehem founded.
1248		Michael Tovy	
1249	Roger Fitz-Roger, 1 year	Roger Fitz-Roger	
1250	John Norman, 1 year	John le Norman	Mayor to be admitted by Barons of the Exchequer.
1251		Adam de Basing	Eastern extension of St Paul's begun.
1252		John de Tuleshan (Draper)	Liberties of City seized by King.
1253		Nicholas Bat	Austin Friary founded.
1254		Ralph Hardell (Draper) [1st]	
1255		Ralph Hardell [2nd]	Liberties of City seized until November.
1256		Ralph Hardell [3rd]	"Cross aisles" of St Paul's begun.
1257		Ralph Hardell [4th] William Fitz-Richard [1st]	
1258		John de Gisors (Pepperer) [3rd]	
1259		William Fitz-Richard [2nd], 1259–60	German merchants established a Steelyard.
		Henry de Wengham, Bishop	

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors, Wardens, and Bishops.	Events.
1260		William Fitz-Richard [3rd], 1260–1	Ludgate rebuilt.
1261		Thomas Fitz-Thomas [1st]	
1262		Thomas Fitz-Thomas [2nd]	
		Henry de Sandwich, Bishop	
1263		Thomas Fitz-Thomas [3rd]. Not admitted by King, but defied him	
1264		Thomas Fitz-Thomas [4th]	Simon de Montfort admitted despite resistance of John de Gisors and the upper classes. GREAT FIRE. (8th.)
1265		Thomas Fitz-Thomas [5th]	Fitz-Thomas imprisoned. London fined 20,000 marks.
		Sir H. Fitz Otes (Otho)	
1266		William Fitz-Richard, Warden	
		Alan de la Zouche, Warden	
		Sir Thomas de Eppegrave, Warden	
1267		Sir Stephen de Eddeworth, Warden	
1268		Sir Hugh Fitz-Otes, Warden	Fight between goldsmiths and tailors.
		William Fitz-Richard, Warden	
1269		Sir Hugh Fitz-Otes, Warden	
		John Adrian (Vintner) [1st], Mayor	
1270		John Adrian [2nd]	
1271		Walter Hervi [1st], 1271–2	Steeple of St Mary-le-Bow fell. Hervi elected by Common Council against will of Aldermen and upper classes.
1272	Edward I.	Walter Hervi [2nd], 1272–3	Crowds led by Hervi to Westminster to secure elevation.
		Henry de Frowike (Pepperer), Warden	National Council in Temple.
1273		Henry le Waleys [1st], 1273–4	
1274		Gregory de Rokesley [1st], to 1281	Edward I. crowned.
1276		Gregory de Rokesley [3rd]	Blackfriars' Church begun.
1278		Gregory de Rokesley [5th]	Reform of coinage. Punishment of clippers.
1279		Gregory de Rokesley [6th]	New coinage. Severe winter. Collapse of Bridge.
1280		Gregory de Rokesley [7th]	
		Richard de Gravesend, Bishop	
1281		Henry le Waleys [2nd], 1281–2	Subscription for repair of Bridge. City raises 6000 marks for Welsh War.
1282		Henry le Waleys [3rd], 1282–3	Steelyard merchants obliged to defray cost of repairs to Bishopsgate. Head of Llewellyn of Wales on London Bridge.
1283		Henry le Waleys [4th], 1283–4	Tun on Cornhill built.
1284		Gregory de Rokesley [9th], 1284–5	Welsh spoils offered at Westminster.
1285		Sir Ralph de Sandwich, Warden	Mayoralty suspended.
1286		Sir Ralph de Sandwich, Warden	Completion of Westminster Abbey, except nave. Great conduit in Chepe built.
1289		Sir Ralph de Sandwich or Sir John le Breton, Warden, until 1297–8	Subsidy for repair of Bridge.
1290			Expulsion of the Jews. Eleanor Crosses at Chepe and Charing Cross.
1293			Nunnery of the Minories founded.

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors and Bishops.	Events.
1294	(Edward I., from 1272)		London furnished ships and troops for French War.
1295			St Etheldreda's founded.
1297		Henry le Waleys [5th], 1297–8	Edward at Westminster. Confesses his errors to a great Assembly.
1298		Henry le Waleys [6th], 1298–9	Crutched Friary founded.
1299		Elias Russell [1st], 1299–1300	Guildhall Chapel built.
1300		Elias Russell [2nd], 1300–1	
1301		Sir John le Blount [1st], 1301–6	
1302			Rule as to tiled roofs enforced.
1305			William Wallace executed.
1306		**Ralph Baldock, Bishop**	
		Sir J. le Blount [2nd] 1306–7	Edward's vow on the Swans.
1307	Edward II.	Sir J. le Blount [3rd], 1307–8	
1308		Nicholas de Farndon (Farringdon) (Goldsmith), 1308–9 [1st]	Whale 70 feet long taken at Greenwich.
1309		Thomas Romeyn, 1309–10	
1310		Richard de Refham (Mercer), 1310–11	Wall of London repaired.
1311		Sir J. de Gisors (Pepperer) [1st], 1311–12	Builder of Gisors ("Gerrard's") Hall
1312		Sir J. de Gisors [2nd], 1312–13	Birth of Edward III. Rejoicings.
1313		**Gilbert de Segrave, Bishop**	
		Nicholas de Farndon (or Faringdon) [2nd], 1313–14	Tallage for Scottish War.
1314		Sir J. de Gisors [3rd], 1314–15	Bannockburn. London sends troops to save Berwick. Scarcity.
1315		Stephen de Abingdon, 1315–16	
1316		John de Wengrave [1st], 1316–17	
1317		**Richard de Newport, Bishop**	
		John de Wengrave [2nd], 1317–18	
1318		John de Wengrave [3rd], 1318–19	Troops sent for Scottish War.
		Stephen de Gravesend, Bishop	
1319		Hamo de Chigwelle (Pepperer) [1st], 1319–20	Sir J. de Gisors exiled.
1320		N. de Farndon [3rd], 1320–1	Court of Leadenhall paved.
1321		Hamo de Chigwelle [2nd], 1321–2	Mayor tries to mediate between King and Barons. City under arms.
1322		Hamo de Chigwelle [3rd], 1322–3	Six hundred men help King to defeat rebel Barons.
		Nicholas de Farndon [4th]	
1323		Royal appointment, Nicholas de Farndon [5th], 1323–4	
1324		Hamo de Chigwelle [4th], 1324–5	Temple granted to Order of St John.
			Queen Isabelle goes to France with Prince Edward.
1325		Hamo de Chigwelle [5th], 1325–6	Queen plotting against King.
1326		Richard de Betaigne (Goldsmith), 1326–7	Enlargement of Guildhall. Revolution in London. Murder of Walter de Stapeldon. Deposition of Edward II.
1327	Edward III.	Hamo de Chigwelle [6th], 1327–8	Liberties of London extended by Charter, 1327. **Goldsmiths', Skinners', and Merchant Taylors' Companies obtain Charter.**
1328		John de Grantham, 1328–9	Walls repaired.
1329		Simon Swanlond, 1329–30	Royal Tournament in Chepe.
1330		Sir John de Poultney (Draper) [1st], 1330–1	Mortimer hanged at Tyburn.
1331		Sir John de Poultney [2nd], 1331–2	Royal Tournament in Chepe.

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors and Bishops.	Events.
1332		John de Preston (Draper), 1332–3	Foundation of Elsing's Spital.
1333		Sir J. de Poultney [3rd], 1333–4	
1334		Reginald-atte-Conduit (Vintner), 1334–5	Troops and money for Scottish War.
1335		Nicholas de Wotton, 1335–6	
1336		Sir J. de Poultney [4th], 1336–7	Mayor founded St Lawrence Pountney College.
1337		Henry d'Arcy [1st], 1337–8	Ships and troops for French War. London fortified.
		Richard de Bintworth, Bishop	
1338		Henry d'Arcy [2nd], 1338–9	Silver-gilt Maces granted to City.
1339		Andrew Aubrey (Grocer) [1st], 1339–40	
		Ralph de Stratford, Bishop	
1340		Andrew Aubrey [2nd], 1340–1	Western window of Grey Friars' Church destroyed, and other damage in a great storm. London ships, under William Haunsard, at Battle of Sluys. £5000 granted to King.
1341		John de Oxford (Vintner), 1341–2	Twenty-six ships and money for French War.
1342		Simon Fraunceys (Mercer) [1st], 1342–3	
1343		John Hamond [1st], 1343–4	
1344		John Hamond [2nd], 1344–5	
1345		Richard Leget ("Lazar"), 1345–6	
1346		Geoffrey de Winchingham (Wythingham), 1346–7	David II. of Scotland prisoner in London. London troops and ships in Creçy-Calais campaign. Grants of money.
1347		Thomas Legge (Skinner) [1st], 1347–8	Fall of Calais. Truce with France.
1348		John Lovekyn [1st] (Fishmonger), 1348–9	THE BLACK DEATH begins in November and continues throughout 1349.
1349		Walter Turke (Fishmonger), 1349–50	
1350		Richard Killingbury, 1350–1	London ships in naval victory over Spaniards.
1351		Andrew Aubrey [3rd], 1351–2	
1352		Adam Fraunceys (Mercer) [1st], 1352–3	Enactment against prostitutes.
1353		Adam Fraunceys [2nd], 1353–4	Guildhall College founded.
1354		Thomas Legge [2nd], 1354–5	Aldermen elected for life.
		Michael of Northburgh, Bishop	
1355		Simon Fraunceys [2nd], 1355–6	
1356		Henry Picard (Vintner), 1356–7	Battle of Poitiers.
1357		Sir John Stody (Vintner), 1357–8	King John II. of France a prisoner of war in London. Two years' truce.
1358		John Lovekyn [2nd], 1358–9	
1359		Simon Dolseby (Grocer), 1359–60	St Mary Graces Abbey (Cistercian) near Tower founded.
1360		John Wroth (Fishmonger), 1360–1	Peace with France.
1361		John Peche (Fishmonger), 1361–2	
		Simon of Sudbury, Bishop	
1362		Stephen Gondish (Draper), 1362–3	Enlargement of Westminster Abbey.
1363		John Notte (Pepperer), 1363–4	
1364		Adam of Bury (Skinner), 1364–5	King John II. and three Kings feasted by Sir H. Picard. Death of John at Savoy.
1365		John Lovekyn [3rd], 1365–6	

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors and Bishops.	Events.
1366	(Edward III., from 1327)	John Lovekyn [4th], 1366–7	
1367		John Andrew (Draper), 1367–8	
1368		Simon of Morden (Fishmonger), 1367–8	
1369		John of Chichester (Goldsmith), 1369–70	French renew war. " Meters " of coal appointed.
1370		John of Barnes (Mercer), 1370–1	
1371		John of Barnes [2nd], 1371–2	Rebuilt St Thomas the Apostle. Sir W. Manny founded Charterhouse.
1372		John Pyell (Mercer), 1372–3	English fleet defeated.
1373		Adam of Bury [2nd or 3rd], 1373–4	
1374		William Walworth [1st] (Fishmonger), 1374–5	Geoffrey Chaucer living in Aldgate.
		William de Courtenay, Bishop	Moorfields to be drained.
1375		John Warde (Grocer), 1375–6	Ditches cleared, and lepers to be excluded.
1376		Adam Staple (Mercer), 1376–7	New nave of Westminster Abbey begun. The Good Parliament. Rising against John of Gaunt.
1377	Richard II.	Adam Staple (removed) Nicholas Brembre (Grocer) [1st], 1377–8	John Philipot fights pirate fleet. Attack on John of Gaunt.
1378		John Philipot (Grocer), 1378–9	
1379		John Hadley [1st] (Grocer), 1379–80	Loan of £5000 to King.
		Robert Braybroke, Bishop	
1380		Sir William Walworth [2nd] (Fishmonger), 1380–1	Loan of £2000 to King. New Mayoral Seal made, 1381.
1381		John of Northampton [1st] (Draper), 1381–2	Wat the Tyler's Revolt.
1382		John of Northampton [2nd], 1382–3	Walworth founds St Michael's College, Crooked Lane. Attempt at moral reform in the City.
1383		Sir Nicholas Brembre [2nd], 1383–4	Faction rife in City.
1384		Sir N. Brembre [3rd], 1384–5	John of Northampton imprisoned.
1385		Sir N. Brembre [4th], 1385–6	Customs House rebuilt.
1386		Nicholas Exton [1st] (Fishmonger), 1386–7	City Walls repaired.
1387		Nicholas Exton [2nd], 1387–8	
1388		Sir N. Twyford (Goldsmith), 1388–9	The Wonderful Parliament. Execution of Brembre.
1389		William Venour (Grocer), 1389–90	
1390		Adam Bamme [1st] (Goldsmith), 1390–1	Welles-Lindsay Joust. St Mary's Overie rebuilt.
1391		John Hend [1st] (Draper), 1391–2	Scarcity. Bamme imports corn.
1392		William Staundon (Grocer), 1392–3	Sir R. Knolles begins to rebuild Whitefriars' Church.
1393		John Hadley [2nd] (Grocer), 1393–4	
1394		John Froshe (Mercer), 1394–5	**Sadlers' Company's Charter.**
1395		William More (Vintner), 1395–6	
1396		Adam Bamme [2nd] (Goldsmith), 1396–7	
1397		Richard Whittington (Mercer) [1st], 1397 Richard Whittington [2nd], 1397–8	
1398		Drew Barentyne (Goldsmith) [1st], 1398–9	**1399, Fishmongers' Company's Charter.**

Year A.D.	Sovereign.	Mayors and Bishops.	Events.
1399	Henry IV.	Thomas Knolles [1st] (Grocer), 1399–1400	London supports Henry of Lancaster. St Martin's in the Vintry founded. Emperor Manuel Palæologos in London.
1400		John Fraunceys (Goldsmith), 1400–1	
1401		John Shadworth (Mercer), 1401–2	Conduit in Cornhill built on site of "Tun."
1402		John Walcote (Draper), 1402–3	
1403		William Ascham (Fishmonger), 1403–4	
1404		John Hend [2nd] (Draper), 1404–5	
1405		John Woodcocke (Mercer), 1405–6 **Roger Walden, Bishop**	All weirs from Staines to Medway destroyed.
1406		Richard Whittington [3rd], 1406–7 **Nicholas Bubwith, Bishop**	Plague in London.
1407		William Sandon (Grocer), 1407–8 **Richard Clifford, Bishop**	Strand paved as far as Savoy.
1408		Drew Barentyne [2nd], 1408–9	Barentyne enlarged Goldsmiths Hall.
1409		Richard Marlowe (Ironmonger) [1st], 1409–10	Loan of 7000 marks to King.
1410		Thomas Knolles [2nd] (Grocer), 1410–11	[ing at. St Bartholomew's Priory, rebuild- R. Whittington founded college and rebuilt St Michael Paternoster.
1411		Robert Chichele (Grocer), 1411–12	Rebuilding of Guildhall begun.
1412		William Waldern [1st] (Mercer), 1412–13	Loan of 10,000 marks to King.
1413	Henry V.	William Cromer (Draper) [1st], 1413–14	
1414		Thomas Falconer (Mercer), 1414–15	Oldcastle's (Lollard) revolt. City ditches cleared. **1415, Cutlers' Company's Charter.**
1415		Nicholas Wootton (Draper) [1st], 1415–16	Postern of Moorgate built. Triumphal entry of King after Agincourt.
1416		(?) Sir Henry Barton (Skinner) [1st], 1416–17	Public lighting in winter ordained. Emperor Sigismund of Germany in London.
1417		Richard Marlowe [2nd], 1417–18	**Haberdashers' Company's Charter.** Brothels suppressed.
1418		William Sevenoke (Grocer), 1418–19	London sends supplies to army besieging Rouen.
1419		Richard Whittington [4th], 1419–20	
1420		William Cambridge (Grocer), 1420–1	St Mary's Overie restored. St Swithun's Church rebuilt by John Hend.
1421		Richard Chichele (Grocer), 1421–2	
1422	Henry VI.	**John Kemp, Bishop** William Waldern [2nd] (Mercer), 1422–3	Funeral of Henry V.
1423		William Cromer [2nd], 1423–4	Rebuilding of Newgate. Will of Whittington.
1424		John Michell (Fishmonger), 1424–5	King James I. of Scotland married at St Mary's Overie.
1425		John Coventry (Mercer), 1425–6 **William Grey, Bishop**	

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors and Bishops.	Events.
1426	(Henry VI., from 1422)	John Reynwell (Fishmonger), 1426–7	Strife between Humphrey of Gloucester and Bishop Beaufort. Drawbridge Tower, L. Bridge commenced.
1427		John Gedney (Draper), 1427–8	Guildhall completed.
1428		(Sir ?) Henry Barton [2nd], 1428–9	Baynard's Castle burnt. Duke Humphrey built a mansion named after it. New St Stephen's, Walbrook, founded by Robert Chichele. **1428, Grocers' Company's Charter.**
1429		William Estfield (Mercer) [1st], 1429–30	Guildhall Chapel rebuilt. **1429, Drapers' and Cordwainers' Companies' Charters.**
1430		Nicholas Wootton [2nd], 1430–1	
		Robert Fitz-Hugh, Bishop	
1431		John Wells (Grocer), 1431–2	Fleet Bridge (Ludgate Circus) rebuilt.
1432		John Perveis (Perneys) (Fishmonger), 1432–3	State reception of Henry VI.
1433		John Brokle (Draper), 1433–4	
1434		Robert Oteley (Grocer), 1434–5	
		Robert Gilbert, Bishop	
1435		Henry Frowike (Mercer) [1st], 1435–6	[built.
1436		John Michell [2nd], 1436–7	Southwark Bridge-Gate fell. Re-
1437		Sir W. Estfield [2nd], 1437–8	**Vintners' and Brewers' Companies' Charters.**
1438		Stephen Browne (Grocer) [1st], 1438–9	Scarcity. Mayor Browne imports rye from Prussia.
1439		Robert Large (Mercer), 1439–40	
1440		John Paddesley (Pattesley) (Goldsmith), 1441–0	St Margaret's Lothbury rebuilt.
1441		Robert Clopton (Draper), 1441–2	Walbrook covered with vault. Penance of Duchess Eleanor of Gloucester.
1442		John Hatherley (Ironmonger), 1442–3	Strand paved. Standard in Chepe rebuilt by will of John Wells. New Standard.
1443		Thomas Catworth (Grocer), 1443–4	
1444		Henry Frowike [2nd], 1444–5	St Paul's spire burned.
1445		Simon Eyre (Draper), 1445–6	**Leathersellers' Company's Charter.** Marguerite of Anjou received by London.
1446		John Olney (Mercer), 1446–7	
1447		John Sidney (Draper), 1447–8	Death of Duke Humphrey. Rivalry of Richard, Duke of York, and Duke of Somerset, etc.
1448		Stephen Browne [2nd], 1450–1	**Girdlers' Company's Charter.**
		Thomas Kemp, Bishop	
1449		Thomas Chulton (Mercer), 1449–50	Leadenhall rebuilt as Corn-market.
1450		Nicholas Wilford (Grocer), 1450–1	Jack Cade's Revolt.
1451		William Gregory (Skinner), 1451–2	
1452		Godfrey Fielding (Mercer), 1452–3	
1453		John Norman (Draper), 1453–4	First Lord Mayor's Water Pageant. **Armourers' and Brasiers' Company's Charter.**
1454		Stephen Foster (Fishmonger), 1454–5	
1455		William Marow (Grocer), 1455–6	Wars of Roses commence.

Year A.D.	Sovereigns.	Mayors and Bishops.	Events.
1456		Thomas Canynge (Grocer), 1456–7	Appearance of Halley's Comet.
1457		Godfrey Boleyne (Mercer), 1457–8	
1458		Thomas Scot (Draper), 1458–9	Temporary reconciliation of factions.
1459		William Hulin (Fishmonger), 1459–60	
1460		Richard Lee (Grocer) [1st], 1460–1	
1461	Edward IV.	Hugh Witch (Mercer), 1461–2	**1461, Barbers' Company's Charter.** Edward IV. elected King.
			1462, Tallow Chandlers' Company's Charter.
1462		Thomas Cooke (Draper), 1462–3	St Paul's new spire completed.
1463		Matthew Philip (Goldsmith), 1463–4	Reception of King by London.
			1464, Ironmongers' Company's Charter.
1464		Ralph Jocelin (Draper) [1st], 1464–5	Edward marries Elizabeth Grey.
1465		Ralph Verney (Mercer), 1465–6	
1466		John Yonge (Grocer), 1466–7	
1467		Thomas Oldgrave (Skinner), 1467–8	Treaty with Burgundy. Tournaments in London.
1468		William Taylor (Grocer), 1468–9	
1469		Richard Lee [2nd], 1469–70	
1470		John Stockton (Mercer), 1470–1	Edward expelled by Warwick.
1471		William Edward (Grocer), 1471–2	Edward returns and overthrows Warwick.
			Conduit in Aldermanbury and Standard in Fleet Street with other reservoirs built.
			London defeats Bastard of Fauconberg.
			1471, Dyers' Company's Charter.
1472		Sir Wm. Hampton (Fishmonger), 1472–3	Moorgate rebuilt.
			1472, Musicians' Company's Charter.
1473		John Tate (Mercer), 1473–4	
1474		Robert Drope (Draper), 1474–5	**1474, Pewterers' Company's Charter.**
1475		Robert Basset (Salter), 1475–6	Edward makes peace with France. Great reception by London.
1476		Sir Ralph Jocelin [2nd], 1476–7	Last restoration of City Walls.
1477		Humphrey Hayford (Goldsmith), 1477–8	Caxton's printing house established.
			1477, Carpenters' Company's Charter.
1478		Richard Gardiner (Mercer), 1478–9	New Standard in Fleet Street, and new conduits elsewhere.
1479		Sir Bartholomew James (Draper), 1479–80	Hanse merchants rebuilt Bishopsgate.
1480		John Browne (Mercer), 1480–1	
1481		William Hariot (Draper), 1481–2	**Cooks' Company's Charter.**
1482		Edmond Shaa (Goldsmith), 1482–3	Edward entertains Mayor and Aldermen at a Royal Hunt.
			1483, Waxchandlers' Company's Charter.
1483	Edward V. Richard III.	Robert Bilisden (Haberdasher), 1483–4	Richard usurps throne and kills his nephew, Edward V.
1484		Thomas Hill (Grocer) / Sir W. Stocker (Draper) } 1484–5	
1485	Henry VII.	John Ward (Grocer)	Sweating Sickness. Coronation of Henry VII.

THE SURVIVING MEDIAEVAL CHURCHES OF LONDON

I. WITHIN THE WALLS OF THE CITY

Dedication.	Date of First Recorded. Church.	Architectural Periods.	Date of Existing Building.	Mediaeval Portions Still Existing.
All Hallows, Barking-(by-the-Tower)	690 (?)	Norman, Early English and Perpendicular	Mainly 15th Century	Columns: Norman (?). Arcades: Early English. Remainder: Perpendicular.
St Olave, Hart Street	Before 1291	Perpendicular	15th Century	Nave and Chancel.
St Peter ad Vincula (Tower of London)	Before 1353	Perpendicular	15th Century	Entire building.
St Andrew Undershaft (*i.e.* under the Maypole)	1362	Late Perpendicular	1520	Entire building.
St Helen, Bishopsgate	Before 1010	Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular	13th to 15th Centuries	Entire building.
St Ethelburga, Bishopsgate	Before 1291 (probably about 800–900	Perpendicular	15th Century	Entire building.
St Katherine Cree	About 1300	Perpendicular and Renaissance	1629	One Perpendicular pier: the rest Renaissance.
St Alphege, London Wall	11th Century	Late Decorated	1774	Tower: Late Decorated, 1329.
Austin Friars (Church of), now the Dutch Church	1253	Decorated and Perpendicular	*c.* 1410	Entire building.
St Mary Aldermary	Before 1291	Late Perpendicular	Rebuilt 1510, and again in 17th Century	Lower part of Tower: rest of church rebuilt by Wren in late Perpendicular style.
St Mary le Bow, Cheapside	11th Century	Norman and 17th Century	Rebuilt above crypt after 1666	Crypt: Norman.

II. WITHOUT THE WALLS

St Giles, Cripplegate	1090	Perpendicular	1500	Entire building (restored).
St Bartholomew the Great, Smithfield	1123	Norman, Early English and Perpendicular	..	Transept arches and Choir, except eastern end: Norman. Doorway of Close and part of Nave: Early English. Lady Chapel, oriel window in Choir and Cloister: Perpendicular.
St Bartholomew the Less	Before 1291	Perpendicular	..	Lower parts of Tower.

Temple Church	1185	Transitional and Early English	Consecrated 1240	Entire building (restored).
St Etheldreda, Ely Place	1295	Decorated	Restored in 19th Century	Entire building.
Savoy Chapel	1245	Perpendicular	Rebuilt 1505	Entire building (restored)
St Sepulchre, Holborn	1178	Late Perpendicular	Rebuilt *c.* 1440	Beautiful fan-vaulted south porch with parvise above and much of aisle walls. Tower dates from 1630-34.
St Stephen's Chapel, Westminster	1348	Decorated	1348	Entire building (extensively restored).
St Margaret, Westminster	1064 (?)	Perpendicular	1475 (rebuilt)	Entire building.
Westminster Abbey	610 (?)	Pre-Norman Romanesque, Early English, Decorated and Perpendicular	1050–1510	Entire building.
St Mary Overie (now St Saviour's Cathedral)	850	Norman, Early English and Perpendicular	1207–1520	Entire building. Nave rebuilt in 19th Century, but Early English arcading retained.
St Andrew, Holborn	..	..	1446, rebuilt	Lower part of Tower still exists, rest rebuilt in 18th Century.
St John, Clerkenwell	1180	Norman, Romanesque and later	..	Crypt: Norman.
Lambeth Palace Chapel	1216	Early English	..	Entire building restored.
St Mary, Lambeth.	1179	Perpendicular	Rebuilt 1850–52	Tower of 15th Century.

III. CHURCHES WHICH SURVIVED THE GREAT FIRE OF 1666 AND WERE SUBSEQUENTLY REBUILT

St Martin in the Fields	Existing before 1222	Rebuilt 1721–26	..
St Clement Danes, Strand	Existing before 1040	Rebuilt 1682 (some earlier masonry incorporated)	Upper part of Steeple by James Gibbs added in 1719.
St Dunstan in the East	Existing before 1291. Partially rebuilt by Wren in the 17th Century. Window of *c.* 1260 existing in 1817	Rebuilt 1817 onwards, except Tower and Spire, modern Gothic	..
St Dunstan in the West, Fleet Street	Existing before 1307	Rebuilt twice, finally in 1831–33	..
St Katharine, Coleman	Built before 1489	Rebuilt 1734	..
St Giles in the Fields	Built about 1117–20. Replaced 1628	Rebuilt 18th Century	
St Botolph, without Bishopsgate	Existing before 1291	Rebuilt 1725–29	
St Botolph, Aldersgate	Existing before 1291	Rebuilt 1796	
St Botolph, without Aldgate	Existing before 1291	Rebuilt 1741–44 by George Dance (the elder)	..
St James, Clerkenwell	Gothic	Demolished 1758	..
St Katharine-by-the-Tower	Founded by Matilda, Stephen's wife	Demolished 1829	Monuments and woodwork taken to new building at Regent's Park.
St George the Martyr, Southwark	Existing before 1122	Rebuilt 1734–36	..
St Olave, Tooley Street	Built about 1300	Rebuilt 1739, demolished 1926	Burnt and rebuilt 1843.
St Mary (Matfellon), Aldgate	Existing 14th Century	Rebuilt in 19th Century	..
St Leonard, Shoreditch	Existing before 1281	Rebuilt 1736–40	..

AUTHORITIES

For the earlier part of the history of London one is dependent to a great extent upon more or less isolated statements of mediaeval chroniclers. Bede's Ecclesiastical History and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle provide nearly all that is known of the city up to and beyond the Norman Conquest, with some slight aid from Asser's Life of Alfred, and the untrustworthy *Encomium Emmae*. The Bayeux Tapestry affords some evidence, more or less trustworthy, on architecture, costume, weapons and shipping.

After the Conquest the sources become somewhat fuller, but for some time they remain scanty and in the nature of general chronicles, much of whose contents is mainly borrowed from predecessors. One gleans, nevertheless, some information from Florence of Worcester, Henry of Huntingdon, and William of Malmesbury. For the reign of Stephen there is the *Gesta Stephani*, and for the early Plantagenet kings the work of William of Newburgh, probably the best of the twelfth-century scribes; the *Gesta Henrici* (" Benedict of Peterborough "), the Chronicles of Roger of Hoveden, Ralph de Diceto, and others. The long reign of Henry III. is covered by Roger of Wendover, Matthew Paris, and the chronicle-series called the *Flores Historiarum* (" Matthew of Westminster "). In all these there are many allusions to London, and they must be accepted because there is little else. Supplementary to them is Fitz-Stephen's description of London—somewhat highly coloured, because London was the birthplace of his hero, St Thomas of Canterbury.

In the thirteenth century, however, one begins, at last, to meet with works relating to London—the *Liber de Antiquis Legibus* and the Chronicle of the Mayors and Sheriffs of London, generally believed to have been compiled by the alderman Arnauld Fitz-Thedmar, and probably coloured by his political ideas—at any rate he is not regarded as too trustworthy. Following him are the " French Chronicle " : and the series of Chronicles covering the period 1189–1576, which served as the basis of Fabyan's work and Gregory's *Chronicle*. All these need to be used with caution : the events are often confusedly described, and dates blundered. They may be supplemented by references to London in general Chronicles, such as those of Rishanger, Walter of Hemingburgh, Higden, Walsingham, Froissart, and others. The famous Paston Letters throw considerable light upon conditions in London during the fifteenth century.

For internal history the primary authorities are, of course, the archives of the city, which have to a great extent been calendared and edited by Messrs H. J. Riley and A. H. Thomas. The Letter Books are invaluable as throwing a clear light upon ordinary civic life : the Journals illustrate civic politics, while the Calendar of Wills and the Pleas and Memorials illuminate other phases. The *Liber Albus*, drawn up by Whittington's friend John Carpenter in 1419, gives a picture of the civic administra-

tion in the early fifteenth century. The work of Riley, who was keeper of the City Records, has been amplified by his successor, Mr A. H. Thomas, in his Calendar of Pleas and Memoranda Rolls; also the Calendar of Early Mayors' Court Rolls.

Kemble's *Ancient Laws and Institutions of England* and his *Saxons in England* are valuable, though some of his conclusions are now questioned; and Thorpe's *Laws of Edward the Confessor* provide some useful information. Stubb's Constitutional History and Howell's State Trials are also of value.

Of general works the principal ones consulted have been J. H. Round's *Geoffrey de Mandeville*, *The Commune of London* and *London under Stephen*; C. L. Kingsford's *London in the Fifteenth Century* (Ford Lectures, 1923–4); R. R. Sharpe's *London and the Kingdom*; and W. Page's *London*. The late Sir G. L. Gomme's works—*London*, and the *Governance of London*—have not been neglected, but they require using with much caution, being in part sermons on a single text.

Mr William Page's work, *London, its Origin and Early Development*, is a valuable book for those who wish to study the early government of London. The obscure points are discussed very fully, and if Chapter X. of the present volume leaves the reader anxious for more information he cannot do better than go to Mr Page's careful treatise. The chapter on Roman London, however, contains some inaccuracies and certain questionable statements.

The volumes on the City Companies, the churches, and the archæological, topographical, and architectural works which have been consulted are too numerous to mention at length. Stow's *Survey* is, of course, of very great value, especially for tracing the ecclesiastical foundations.

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